

DEDICATION

To my husband, whose interest and understanding have been an invaluable aid in the preparation of this little book, with the earnest prayer that it may be the means of helping, if only a little, towards the realization of the beautiful Zionie dream that is ours.



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FOREWORD

As a church we are developing a literature of distinctive motif and special appeal, this book being an excellent sample. Almost a century ago the church teachings suggested here were announced to the world. As a result of the preaching of those ideas, thousands of yearning souls gathered to the standard of social betterment that had a consistent religious basis. The dark days of apostasy and disruption, followed by reorganization, delayed the realization of the Zionie dream yet failed to affect its intrinsic beauty and attractive power.

This book succeeds admirably in combining essential factors in the Zionie program and presenting them graphically and effectively. Possibly the demands of the hour to be brief may have been heeded too literally by the author, but she has been faithful to her ideal of correct emphasis in stressing ideals rather than a detailed romantic situation.

As the days go by, this author and others will no doubt take up and develop the Zionie theme in song and fiction and exposition. Thus will we all be led to a happy unity in clear ideals, forming the proper nucleus for the real Zion.

E. D. MOORE.

INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI.

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A Reasonable Service

CHAPTER 1

THE POPULAR YOUNG GRADUATE

HOW good it seems to be home again!" Blythe pulled down a branch of the tall lilac bush and buried her face in its fragrant blossoms. "Don't you just love lilacs, Uncle John?"

"I love a certain young lady more," averred the lean, kind-faced man she addressed, "and it seems mighty good to have her home again?"

"Such an old blarney of an uncle," she accused him gayly, as she ran up the steps to the wide veranda, tucking a spray of lilacs into her belt as she went. At the top stood her aunt, waiting in smiling dignity to greet her. Blythe had a feeling that if Aunt Lillian had been suddenly forced to climb a tree she would have done it without its affecting her poise in the least.

"We have been waiting for you," announced Mrs. Blake, leading the way to the dining room. "Hester is quite out of patience."

But the middle-aged housekeeper, who looked after everything in general, did not seem put out in the least as she beamingly responded to Blythe's impetuous greeting. "My, it does a body's eyes good to get sight of you again, my child!" she said. "And to think you won't have to go away any more! But I suppose some young chap will come along some day and carry you off for good and all."

"Not me!" was Blythe's cheerful reply. "Give me Uncle John every time."

She was at his heels while he did his evening work, petting her favorite horses and cows, viewing the new calves with delight, exclaiming over the fat baby pigs, and asking questions until her uncle declared she was an animated interrogation point.

"I was afraid two years of fine arts would spoil you," he said, "but you seem to be as good a farmer as ever."

"I shall always live on a farm," she declared. "There is more music here than in the clang of city pavements for me!"

"Better stay with your old uncle, then," he warned her. "You don't know as much about the hard work that most women on the farm have to do as you might."

"Perhaps not," she replied, thoughtfully. Then with animation, "Isn't this the night for the township meeting?"

"It is. May I have the pleasure of your company?"

"If you will let me drive the car just as fast as I want to?"

"It won't make over seventy-five miles an hour," he replied soberly, and they both laughed together like happy children.

Truly Blythe had known little of hardship in the twenty-three care-free, happy years of her life. The one dark cloud had been the death of her parents when she was but a child, and the loneliness and anguish of the days that followed; but her uncle's childless home was opened wide to her, and since then life had been wonderfully full—high school and business college, for her uncle declared she must have practical education; then a course of instruction in her beloved music, a reward of merit, he called it.

John Blake was one of the wealthiest men in the surrounding country, having been left a snug estate by his father and adding to it yearly by his energy and shrewd management. His associates knew him for a keen business man, yet honest to the last penny. His friends valued him

for his true worth, but few, even of them, knew how often his purse strings were loosened in behalf of the widows and fatherless. Some of them remembered how, years ago, he had loved a blue-eyed girl, daughter of a neighboring farmer, and their coming marriage was planned; then she was suddenly stricken by a fever, and in a few days her death left John Blake facing a blank wall that shut out the happy visions of the future.

After a few years, when life had partly settled back into its old channels, he married pretty Lillian Randall, one of the popular young women of the little city. It was no secret among her friends that she was marrying him for his money. He himself held vague suspicion of it, but her seeming sincerity was so disarming that he dismissed the idea. After marriage came disillusionment, but it was characteristic of the man that he turned a smiling face to the world and held his peace.

When his sister's little daughter, a tiny, golden-haired child of seven summers, came into his home, he lavished upon her all the pent-up affection of his nature. They were comrades and chums, sharing mutually each other's joys and sorrows. Perhaps this was why she grew up to womanhood so capable and unspoiled.

To-night, as the powerful car went spinning along the road at a hair-raising speed, with Blythe's delighted hands grasping the wheel, they chattered of the thousand and one things that occur in half a year. They were quite alone, for Mrs. Blake never attended any of the farmers' meetings. In fact, one of the first reforms she had tried to bring about after their marriage was a change of occupation for her husband. But here John Blake stood firm, and when she found that he could not be moved, she returned to her social pleasures with unabated zeal, for there were always a team and carriage and later a car at her disposal. So, through the passing years, they followed diverging paths, and if John Blake missed the companionship he had looked forward to, he gave no sign.

As the big roadster sped down the last long slope to the country church where the meeting was to be held, a small, leisurely-moving car suddenly appeared in the glare of the headlights. Without checking speed, Blythe blew a mellow blast on the horn and flew past, one end of the bumper just grazing the bank and the other barely missing the fender of the smaller machine.

"You'd better slow down, young lady!" exclaimed Mr. Blake, nervously. "I've got my will

made and my life insurance paid up, but I'll be hanged if I want to try the next world just yet!"

"All right, uncle," was the cheerful reply. "It was only up to fifty-five, but if you say so I'll drive a little slower."

In the church gathered a crowd of the farmers of the surrounding country, with their wives and families. In a moment Blythe was the center of a whirl of welcome, for she was a general favorite with her neighbors.

"We'll be glad to have you here to lead the singing again," said one of the men, with some relief. "I've done the best I could, but you're the one for that job?"

In the rush of greeting her friends, Blythe had failed to notice a new arrival until Mr. Blake piloted him to her. He was a little above middle height, broad shouldered, with clear, gray eyes, and a shock of light hair that showed copper tints in the lamplight.

"Blythe, this is Mr. Cameron, our new county agent," he said. "My niece, Miss Halliday, just back from school."

Blythe decided she liked his straightforward look and, as she acknowledged the introduction, gave him a glance of cool appraisal which he returned with evident interest.

"Was it you who tried to annihilate my poor little runabout, Miss Halliday?" he inquired, affably. "I have seen Mr. Blake drive a number of times before, and I couldn't understand what was the matter to-night unless he had become a sudden victim of drink."

"You must excuse me for frightening you," Blythe replied, almost too politely. Evidently here was an impertinent young man in need of suppression. "I haven't had my hands on the wheel for six months, and it was rather exhilarating." Then she turned her attention to another acquaintance, while Uncle John tried to hide his enjoyment at Neil Cameron's discomfiture.

The meeting was shortly called to order and the questions of the hour were soon under discussion.

"I'll tell you what!" exclaimed a short, excitable man, who gained the floor after the best methods of haying, harvesting, and kindred subjects had been debated. "There is just one thing ahead of us, and that's cutting down production. I've had three men hired in as many weeks, and the last one left this morning because he said he didn't care about working fourteen hours a day when he could make more in the city, working nine. He forgets that his board and laundry and

usual good time will more than eat up the balance; but my problem remains the same. I can manage eighty or a hundred acres alone, and that's what I'm going to do next year. The rest of you will, too, before long. Let the rest of the world starve if it won't work! I can raise my own living."

A smile went around the room, for they all knew the speaker, but there was sympathy also in the tanned faces.

"Our problems are all much the same, I think," said a quiet-voiced, intelligent-looking man in the rear of the room, "but we don't want the rest of the world to starve, and I don't believe it would, even if we cut down our farming area as so many of us think seriously of doing. It would of necessity drive more back to the land. But we must farm more intensively, if possible, and insist on a fair price for what we produce, and not stand idly by and let prices go tumbling down at the behest of the gamblers on the board of trade. We who have worked over our crops, worried over them, yes, and some of us have prayed over them, no doubt, know better what they are worth in dollars and cents than some one who probably has never raised a peck of corn in his life.

"The question of help must be solved in some

way, too, though I confess I don't know how. Our wives are in the same fix when they need help in the house. The young people are flocking to town to spend the days waiting tables in the restaurants or selling shoestrings and patent breakfast foods behind the counters, and the nights at dances and moving picture shows. If some one can propose a rival form of entertainment and make farm life so attractive that young men and women will be willing to stay in the country, he will have conferred a boon upon farming humanity."

"Well, what shall we do?" inquired another, rather flippantly. "Build a dance hall in every community and put on a moving picture every other night?"

"I don't think this community would favor that"—one of the women spoke this time. "I believe we would all rather see the church the center of interest. But religion doesn't seem to appeal greatly to the young people of to-day."

"It might if there weren't so many white-livered preachers." This came from John Blake. "If they had initiative enough to preach live sermons, and not only preach, but practice, and to give the young people something to do that would provide a harmless outlet for their energies, as

well as something helpful to give some practical form to their religion, there would be less trouble in holding them. They want something definite to do, right here in this vale of tears, instead of the vague hope of sometime sitting in heaven and playing a golden harp. No sane, normal human being, old or young, wants to spend all the time, even in the other world, playing a harp! Suppose he has no ear for music!"

This outburst aroused mingled amusement, amazement, and sympathy among his hearers, but John Blake was in the habit of bursting a mental bomb in the midst of conservative assemblies, so nobody became excited, but having departed so far from the original question and arrived at no conclusion, the meeting adjourned after a rousing chorus under Blythe's competent leadership.

The County Agent in a Religious
Argument

CHAPTER 2

A RELIGIOUS ARGUMENT

WILL you go to the church social this afternoon, Blythe?" inquired Mrs. Blake one morning a few days later.

"Oh, I had forgotten about the social, Aunt Lillian!" Her aunt failed to detect the relief under the seeming regret in the girl's voice. "I've promised Marian I'd spend the whole day with her. You know I haven't been there yet and haven't even seen that blessed infant."

"Why can't you postpone that until to-morrow? I know Mr. Titus will be disappointed if you aren't there."

"Oh, hang Mr. Titus!" exclaimed Blythe, irreverently. "I don't care if he is my pastor, I wish I'd never see him again! Why did they let Mr. Reid go? He had backbone enough to do things worth while, even if he didn't use so much flowery rhetoric in the pulpit."

"Blythe! Blythe!" Mrs. Blake was plainly shocked. "I'm afraid you've been listening to some of your uncle's heresies, and I'm sure college hasn't improved your vocabulary. I wish

you could realize what an estimable young man Mr. Titus is."

"So do I, Aunt Lillian," replied Blythe rather wearily, "but I'm afraid I never shall appreciate him. His hands are so soft and his voice is so—silky. I think I'd better go before I get saucy, auntie," and with a whirlwind kiss she was off, before Mrs. Blake had time to expostulate further.

It was a beautiful blue-and-gold morning, and Blythe was exuberantly happy as she whistled to her Scotch collie and raced madly across the orchard and into the dewy meadow beyond. Gaining a knoll, she stopped to look back at the big white farmhouse, with its velvety lawn shaded by stately trees, and the wide orchard joining it—a band of sun-pricked shadow. Near and far stretched squares of whispering corn, of waving wheat, of woodland and meadow, dotted here and there with sheltering groves from which peeped the roofs of neighboring farmhouses with their accompaniment of familiar red barns.

"What a glorious old world to live in, Laddie!" she cried, stooping to pat the appreciative collie, who bounced up and down with pleasure and then lay down and rolled in the wet, sweet clover. She did not tarry long, however, but

crossed the meadow, skirted the bank of a little creek that ran through a bit of woodland, and at last reached a snug homestead, much less pretentious than the one she had left, but withal neat and comfortable.

In the garden near by a young woman was hard at work with a wheel hoe. Little beads of perspiration dotted her flushed face, and she was so engrossed with her task that she was not aware of Blythe's approach until she spoke:

"What an energetic young person you are! And who takes care of His Royal Highness while you work out here?"

Marian gave a start of surprise, then laughed and explained: "He's in dreamland, taking care of himself. I was hurrying to get through before you came and while he is quiet. Come on into the house."

"Not much. We'll finish the garden and talk while we work. I can't appreciate the infant anyway until he wakes up."

The two presented a physical contrast as they worked away together—Blythe slim and fair, with hair like the morning sunlight, and Marian plump and brown-eyed, with dark, curly masses of rebellious locks that slipped from their moor-

ings as she worked, and curled about her moist face.

The summer sun gained in power as it rose, and both were warm and weary when the last weed was routed and they sought the shelter of the cool, vine-covered porch where Junior had finished his nap and was voicing his displeasure in a series of appealing little wails.

"Oh, let me hold him!" cried Blythe, catching him up and hugging him. "Isn't he nice to squeeze? so round and soft!"

Then she smiled at Marian and wondered a little at the light in her brown eyes as she took the warm little form in her arms and cooed over him in true, indescribable mother fashion.

"Have you heard from Jean lately?" Marian inquired a few minutes later, when conversation had begun to lag.

"Not lately," Blythe replied. "There may be a letter pursuing me now. I left school a few days early, you know."

Jean was Marian's older sister, and the three girls had been constant chums until the marriage of the two and Blythe's continued attendance at college had forced a parting of the ways. The latter had not been ill-pleased when her friend had chosen to wed Mrs. Blake's nephews, her

own playmates and companions in innumerable hairbreadth experiences during growing-up time. Jean lived now in a neighboring city, where her husband held a position in a large factory and where Blythe renewed friendship by periodical visits during vacation time.

When Marian spoke again it was with some hesitancy: "I wonder if you knew that she and Ralph have changed faiths—joined the Latter Day Saints?"

"No, I didn't know it!" Blythe was visibly surprised. "Does Aunt Lillian know?"

"Oh, yes; I wonder she didn't tell you."

"She has been busy since I came home, and away most of the time. I just escaped going with her this afternoon. I hope Mr. Titus is fatally disappointed," she added maliciously, and her companion giggled with delighted understanding, then volunteered further information:

"They attended a series of meetings last winter and became interested and finally joined the church a month ago. Of course many of their friends are friends no longer, but Jean's last letter doesn't express any regret. In fact, Roger and I are becoming interested ourselves. They have been sending us some of the church publi-

cations, and Roger declares it is the most sensible religion he has ever heard of."

"It is, and the most scriptural as well." Both girls started, for neither had heard the approach of the sun-browned young man who stood in the doorway, wiping the sweat of honest toil from his forehead. "I've asked Ralph several questions that have made Mr. Titus squirm and got a reference from the Bible that answered them every time."

"I'm afraid you've been listening to what Aunt Lillian calls heresy," Blythe said, an odd little smile on her face. "I didn't suppose any member of the Randall family would forsake the church of his fathers."

The boy's face sobered instantly. "It's a test, surely," he said. "Ralph and Jean have no relatives any more except Marian and myself. Aunt Lillian has forbidden them the house, and father and mother very nearly did the same."

"Don't forget me when you are mentioning relatives," Blythe remarked, quietly. "I've never yet refused to associate with anyone on account of religion, and I'm going to visit Jean as usual, if she doesn't object."

"Write and tell her so," exclaimed Marian, im-

A Religious Argument

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pulsively. "It will lighten her homesick heart wonderfully."

At that moment their attention was attracted by the sound of a motor in distress, and shortly after a trim coupe limped painfully into view from behind the row of trees that bordered the road.

"Some one in trouble, I suppose," observed Roger, while Blythe rose from the hammock to peep inquisitively through the vine-covered lattice. Then she fell back with an exclamation of disgust.

"Mr. Titus, as I live," she cried. "I dodged the social only to have the social come to me! Don't you dare tell him I'm here, Roger."

"I won't need to," he replied, calmly; "he's coming up to see for himself. And I'm going to keep him here for dinner, too," he added, mischievously.

"Good morning, Roger." It was the pastor's voice at the door. "I'm having trouble with my car, and, knowing you are a good hand with a motor, I stopped to see if you would help me. I must be in town as soon as possible—why, how are you, Miss Halliday! Mrs. Blake told me you were home, but you must have been in hiding."

"Just resting and getting acquainted with my family," Blythe explained. There was no great show of warmth in her manner, and as Roger was leading the way to the crippled car Mr. Titus was forced to follow. The machine, a gift from the grateful members of his parish, had not proved an unmixed blessing to the minister, for he had no leaning towards mechanics, and besides, it was difficult to dress as befitted a gentleman of the cloth and be ready for the work of a chauffeur as well.

"I think I shall have to hire a driver," he observed, as Roger began to dissect the unruly motor. "My purse will hardly permit it, but it is humiliating to be hung up this way so often. Truly a minister of the gospel has a hard row to hoe!"

Roger smothered a smile into the internals of the machine, but ventured no word of sympathy. He found the trouble shortly and had just finished getting the car in working order when another, a small, brewster-green runabout, drew up and stopped in a swirl of dust.

"Good morning, Mr. Randall. In trouble?" It was the county agent, homeward bound after a morning call somewhere in the country.

"Good morning," Roger replied, cordially, for

the young agent was winning the confidence of the countryside, and he and Roger had been friends and classmates at the agricultural college they had both attended. "Mr. Titus is having the trouble, not I," and he introduced the two and wondered why they inspected each other so narrowly.

"I shall be glad to take you back to town with me," Neil said to the minister.

"Thank you," was the reply, "but I think my car is ready for use again now, thanks to Roger."

Neil mentally commented that the explanation was unnecessary, for Roger was dusty and smeared with grease, while the pastor was quite as immaculate as usual. Then he turned to the former.

"I stopped to see about putting on a soil erosion demonstration next week," he said. "Would you consent to have it here, or haven't you any ditches on the farm?"

"Yes, I think you can find one or two," answered Roger with a grin. "But come on to the house, both of you. It is nearly noon and we can look things over before dinner. My team is out in the field, anyway." And, overruling objections, he led the way to the house, where he

left Mr. Titus, who had forgotten his hurry, while he and Neil went to examine the field.

"Run on in and entertain the minister," Marian commanded, as she came back to the kitchen after ushering her guest into the cool porch, which was their summer living room.

"Never!" exclaimed Blythe. "I'll fry your chicken and mash your potatoes and do every blessed thing that's left to do out here, but I absolutely balk at that!"

"Perhaps you wouldn't mind entertaining *some* of our company," suggested Marian, teasingly.

"Whom do you mean?" Blythe inquired, pausing in the act of turning the chicken, with her fork poised in the air.

"Mr. Cameron. He is young and charming. Haven't you met him yet?"

"Oh, yes. I have my own opinion of his charm, however."

"Blythe, Blythe! You are impossible! Did ever a man breathe that could meet with your requirements?"

"As a source of entertainment, yes. As an asset through life, no. They are either atrociously impious or inhumanly religious. Give me a man who is clean even though red-blooded, and

red-blooded even though he has a reverent mind and gentle hands." Which was a long and astonishingly serious speech for Blythe.

Marian stared at her for a few surprised seconds. "Well," she exclaimed at length, "which of those specifications does the county agent lack? Is he too impious or too religious, or what? Roger seems to like him."

"Which ought to be recommendation enough for anyone in the eyes of his wife," Blythe retorted, smiling. "No, I've never even heard a thing against him, my dear. He just seems—sort of irresponsible—you might call it superficial."

"I shall keep an eye out for a man cut after the pattern of an angel," Marian assured her with resignation, "and if I should find one I'll surely send him around for inspection."

The return of Roger and Neil put an end to further discussion, and soon they were all gathered around a well-laden table. For a time general matters of interest, more especially of farm interest, formed the topic of conversation, during which Mr. Titus devoted himself to the fried chicken. He seemed somewhat bored and, when a lull occurred, took advantage of it to remark:

"You scientific farmers are beyond me. I can't even discuss your line of business with you any more. Now mine is religion, and naturally I feel that the time has been wasted to some extent unless we talk at some length regarding matters that pertain to the salvation of the soul. I feel that we ought all to give more time and effort to the cause of Christ. I am thinking of putting on a series of revival meetings this fall, perhaps with the aid of some evangelist, and wherever I go I am asking the help and cooperation of the people."

He paused, but no one spoke, so he continued: "Of course we are all ready to loosen our purse strings and help, but if each of us would do some personal service, think what an inspiration it would be to the minister! For instance, Miss Halliday, you might lend us the use of your voice—that beautiful gift from heaven. You can preach as eloquent a sermon with it as can the minister himself. The burning question each should ask him or herself is, 'How much can I do to save souls?' "

"That should be the burning question, surely," observed Neil, deliberately, "and it seems that something should be done when we see the way the world is going. We are becoming a nation

of Sabbath breakers. Our people are leaving the churches to flock to the pleasure resorts by the hundreds on Sundays. Vice and wickedness are on every hand. But there is another question the church must answer, 'What have I to give them when they come to me? If they come asking bread, must I give them a stone?' I know that pleasure draws many away; but I have heard enough expressed to know that many have tried out religion and found it wanting. 'If it is not more satisfying than the world,' they say, 'why bother about it at all?' They have demanded the bread of life and received a stone, and it is causing widespread dissatisfaction with religion everywhere."

Mr. Titus gave the impression of recovering from a shock to some of his inner mechanism, while Blythe felt temporarily stunned. What business had this superficial young man expressing ideas like these?

But Roger, without waiting for the pastor to recover, took up the cudgel where Neil had laid it down. "That is much the way I feel about it," he said. "I have gone to church ever since I can remember, and I must confess it seems more like a form of godliness and a denial of the power thereof. I have heard men and

women kneel and pray for the Lord to speak to them. But how can he speak? They deny that he does so in this day and age of the world. Oh, it stirs my blood to read of the Pentecostal showers given to the church of old? If they could speak with tongues and prophesy under the power of the Holy Spirit in those days, why cannot those things be given now?"

"They could be given if they were needed"—Mr. Titus seemed to have regained his breath—"but we do not need direct revelation to-day. We have the written word. Christ had promised to send the Comforter, and it was sent in this form that the faith of the early Christians might be strengthened. They were spiritual babes, whereas we have progressed beyond that stage."

"Heaven pity them if they were any weaker spiritually than some of us to-day!" ejaculated Roger, fervently.

But Neil was speaking again. "Paul tells us in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians," he said, "that 'God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.' If the Lord changes not, as Malachi, the very last prophet of the Old Testament, proclaims,

have we not the right to expect those things in the church to-day?"

"But we do not need them now." The pastor was becoming desperate. "Paul says also that 'whether there be prophecies they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease.' That time has come, don't you see?"

"Have you a Bible, Roger?" Neil asked, and when it was put into his hands he turned to the thirteenth chapter of the first Corinthian epistle and read, "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.' And in his letter to the Ephesians," he continued, "Paul says plainly that 'He [Christ] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' So, you see, these things are to remain in the church until she has reached that

state of perfection when she does not need them any more."

"That is just what I have been trying to tell you." Mr. Titus was somewhat triumphant. "That is why we do not need them to-day."

"I'm afraid we are still a long way from perfection," Neil said, slowly, "and the world was never farther from a unity of faith than to-day, with a Presbyterian church on one corner, a Methodist on another, a Christian, a Catholic, a Baptist in between, while mystic shrines and spiritualistic mediums flourish everywhere in our cities."

Mr. Titus hastily finished his last bite of strawberry shortcake and rose from the table.

"You will excuse me for leaving so soon, won't you, Mrs. Randall? I have enjoyed your excellent dinner so much I really hadn't noticed how late it is getting. Sometime, when I have more time at my disposal, I should like to finish this interesting argument, Mr. Cameron. If you are going to the social, Miss Halliday, why not give me the pleasure of your company?"

"Thank you, Mr. Titus, but I'm not planning on going. I had forgotten about it and promised to spend the day here, so I had to turn down Aunt Lillian's invitation this morning." Blythe's

cheeks were flushed and her pulses singing, for she scented battle in the glances the two men exchanged, and somehow her opinion of Neil had risen several degrees in the last half hour.

"Are you an ex-minister, Mr. Cameron?" she inquired, when they were left alone for a few minutes.

"Not I!" Neil replied, smiling. "No one ever accused me of that before."

"Then where did you learn to quote scripture?" she persisted. "Do you study your Bible while you race about in that green runabout looking after the interests of the rural citizens of the county?"

There was a faint smile on Neil's lips, and his eyes were very tender as he replied, "I had a mother, once."

Blythe pondered over many things as she walked home across the fields at sunset with Laddie frisking beside her. The words she had heard quoted from the Book of all books kept repeating themselves in her mind with unceasing force. She had a feeling, vague but inexpressibly sweet, of following again some dim trail of childhood that her feet had stumbled upon after years of wandering. The sun sank behind the horizon and the evening star peeped softly out of the

afterglow. As she lifted her eyes to its pure, white radiance, a prayer, sincere though unuttered, leaped from the restless, unsatisfied depths of her soul, "Help me, O Father of Light, to find the way that leads to thee!"

RLDS Library — Ann Arbor

A Creature of Circumstance

CHAPTER 3

A CREATURE OF CIRCUMSTANCE

THE summer days passed swiftly for Blythe. She was busy at home helping Hester keep the household machinery running, and with the various activities of the church she attended in Sardis, of which the Reverend Claude Titus was pastor. Her one great gift, a full soprano voice of wonderful sweetness, seemed always in demand, yet she wondered sometimes as she sang if she really were lightening the burden of care on some of the tired faces upturned to hers—for they were there, depressed and weary, even in the congregation of Grace Church, the richest and most exclusive in the little city. She felt an inexplicable longing to be of more use in the world—just how, she could not tell. Surely this was not the kind of service rendered by the man of Nazareth as he walked the shores of Galilee. Surely there was something to do besides singing Sunday after Sunday to the richly clad occupants of the Grace Church pews.

She voiced something of this to her uncle one

Sunday, as she stood on the veranda where he sat reading, after her return with Mrs. Blake from church—for John Blake seldom attended services at Grace Church.

“Do you think, Uncle John,” she said, as she stood flipping her gloves discontentedly against the veranda rail, “that I’m really useful enough to deserve a place on this old earth?”

Mr. Blake looked somewhat startled at Blythe’s outburst. “Why, I had never thought of it just that way,” he answered, peering at her over his glasses, “but I know one place would seem mighty empty without you.”

“Please be serious, uncle,” she begged, sitting down on the arm of his chair and rumpling his hair affectionately. “I’m dreadfully out of sorts with myself, lately. Here I am, helping Hester when I feel like it, and going off for a good time whenever I feel like doing that. Why, I even have them filed away ahead of time like business engagements. Bob Weston was home to-day from the city and wanted to arrange at least three theater parties during my intended visit at Jean’s. He was real cross when I told him ‘Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.’ Dear old Bob!” she added, with a little thoughtful smile.

"Is that the way you feel about him?" inquired Mr. Blake, watching her face keenly.

"Yes, just as I used to feel when we robbed Hester's cooky jar and divided the spoils out under the apple trees. He is just the same, only grown a little bigger."

"He has a good position in the city now, hasn't he?" John Blake's eyes were still studying the girl's profile.

"Oh, yes—with Grandfather Weston, who increases Bob's salary to suit his wants."

"Are you a cynic, Blythe?"

"I wonder!" Her voice was tired, and with a sudden gesture he swept her into the shelter of his arms.

"Honey," he said, gently, "never marry any man unless you respect him for his manhood and true worth, as well as love him, and if you can do that, don't worry too much about his bank account."

Blythe was silent for a few moments, then returned to the subject of her grievance. "And then on Sundays," she went on, with a gesture of disgust, "after every service here comes some one with the senseless flattery that some people seem to think should be dosed out regularly. It affects me just as too much candy did when I

was a youngster. If I could feel that I actually helped some one, instead of merely pleasing the artistic ear—I've heard of the ministry of music, but I don't believe that anyone who goes to Grace Church needs it!"

Mr. Blake took his spectacles off, wiped them, and tried to put them on again upside down, a sure sign he was perturbed. "You keep right on singing at Grace Church, honey," he admonished. "I know some who go there, and they've told me they get more good from your singing than any other part of the service—and it wasn't any of those who give you regular doses of flattery, either. I wonder—," he hesitated and regarded her thoughtfully. "Be ready right after dinner, and we'll take a little trip this afternoon—and have some of your best music along," he concluded.

He was on the porch again when Blythe appeared at the appointed time, cool and fresh in blue linen, with a big roll of music under her arm.

"Not knowing what will be expected of me," she said gayly, "I tried to come well supplied."

"What have you here?" he asked, turning the pieces over critically. "Better run and get that

book of old songs. You won't need much of this new-fangled stuff."

"All right." Blythe's good humor was unimpaired. "I'll take this, too, though. I want to be prepared for anything."

"Where are you two going?" inquired Mrs. Blake, languidly, from the depths of a big wicker chair, as the girl disappeared.

"To the county poor farm." There was a half-smile on her husband's face as he answered. "Want to go along?"

"Good gracious, no!" was the shocked reply. "What in the world are you going there for? I should think Blythe would be tired enough to stay at home and rest this hot afternoon! She has to be at the services again to-night, too."

But Mr. Blake just then perceived Blythe returning through the hall, and beating a hasty retreat, piloted her out through a side door and into the waiting car. He took the opposite direction from Sardis, and for a dozen miles the "chummy" roadster, which was its driver's special favorite, glided along while Blythe vainly racked her brain in an effort to guess where they were going, and proudly refrained from asking.

"Some one in trouble, I suppose," he observed as they spied a small, brewster-green runabout

stalled at the side of the road a short distance ahead. "Why, it is Neil Cameron!" and he drew up with a friendly inquiry.

"Yes, sir; I do seem to be in some trouble," Neil admitted, ruefully regarding a damaged tire. "This is my second blowout to-day, and my supply of patches is gone, too."

"Run the car on to the next house on the rim," advised Mr. Blake. "Then get in and take a spin with us, and we'll hunt a garage and get a new tire before we come back, if you wish. It is only a few miles to the next town. I know the man who lives down the road a few rods, and he'll look after your car until we get back, if he's at home." The farmer proved to be at home, and soon the roadster was purring along the dusty road, Neil in the back seat, in the midst of what seemed to be a miniature horticultural display.

"Going to the fair, Mr. Blake?" he inquired with a smile.

"No; just a visit to some friends of mine," was the reply. "I have Blythe guessing; now you do the same. Ever meet the young fellow before who lives back there where you left the car?" he asked, as they bowled along fast enough to fan away the heat of the August sun, yet slow enough so conversation was not difficult. "He

went to college with Roger and remembered you."

"I thought his face and name seemed familiar," Neil replied; "but I could not think where I had seen him. He has a nice little home there."

"He's renting," Mr. Blake said. "Bought a place of his own a few years ago, made a payment down, and was getting along splendidly. Then last spring he lost nearly all of his hogs, which he had been depending on to sell and raise the money to meet his payments with, and lost them so near the time his interest was due that the banks couldn't help him out on such short notice because of the tightness of the financial situation. Some modern Shylock in the city held the mortgage, who refused to give the boy more time and kicked him out, minus several thousand dollars. He came to me for help, but I had everything tied up, too, just then. He thought pretty seriously of leaving the farm altogether for a while, but one day when I was talking to him he gritted his teeth and said, 'I'm going to rent a farm next year, Mr. Blake. I'll show that old thief he can't put me out of business, with all his dirty dollars!' He's making good now, because both he and his plucky little wife have the courage; but that shows what is going on in busi-

ness every day—the survival of the man with the biggest capital back of him, and the crushing of the smaller struggler who is honestly trying to earn a living and a home. It is within the bounds of the law, but not the bonds of brotherhood.”

“Brotherhood is something modern society cares little about in a general sense,” Neil said, thoughtfully. “I have had a chance to observe conditions, both in the city and country, and I am convinced that if we had a system in operation of which the brotherhood of man was the underlying principle, a system in which the struggling laborer or business man of small means would be given a helping hand instead of a kick, that we should go farther towards solving the labor difficulties of to-day than all the strikes and arbitration committees in the world.”

“Yes, but where would you find anyone in this selfish old world to work out this system—enough people to make it practicable? Individual effort is nothing more than charity in many cases—helping the one who is hard up over one tight place, only to do it again when he needs it the next time.”

“It shall be done, I think,” Neil answered with conviction. “No one has studied the situation but will admit that the world at large is in a par-

oxysm of money-grabbing, of wickedness, and heedless personal liberty and pleasure; yet there are some, I am sure, who still have higher ideals at heart, who work for and dream of the time when there shall be neither want nor misery among the children of men!"

"You are a dreamer," said John Blake. "I was one myself once. I have developed into a cynic, though a charitable one, I hope, if the combination is not impossible."

Blythe listened to the conversation with interest. It was one of Mrs. Blake's grievances that as a small girl she would leave the chatter of the afternoon club to sit on the sunny doorstep with Uncle John and an unwilling man or two who had, of necessity, come as driver for a carriage load of womenfolk, and listen to them with delight as they discussed the weather or politics. Just now she was debating in her own mind what manner of young man this was. She had met him often during the summer at the informal gatherings of the young people of the neighborhood, where he was a frequent guest, and found her liking for him increasing as they became better acquainted. She had never seen him at church, nor heard him mention religion since the day of Mr. Titus's rout, and mentally classified him as

one of those who had asked for bread and received a stone and turned away in disgust.

She was roused from her reverie by a shifting of the gears as Mr. Blake turned into a side road, climbed a long grade, and drove in through a maple-shaded driveway to a large building set in the middle of a grassy lawn.

"The county farm! Uncle John, why did you come here?" Blythe asked in surprise.

"You know what you told me before dinner. I brought you here to sing for these friendless people."

"But, perhaps they don't want me to!" She was plainly upset at the idea.

"Wouldn't you, if you were in the poorhouse?"

Blythe suppressed a shudder and met her uncle's eyes squarely. "I'll not fail you, Uncle John," she said, "but find out before I commit myself, please."

A few moments later the three were greeting the inmates of the home, who were gathered on the big porch.

"This young lady has come to sing for you." The caretaker's wife, who had cordially assured Blythe that her services would be welcomed, addressed her charges. The girl's heart ached as she looked at them—most of them old and infirm

and bearing evidence of having seen happier days. Some seemed openly delighted at the prospect, while others merely scowled. However, they all filed into the living room, as the matron led the way to the piano, for at least this offered a break in the dull monotony of their lives.

"Do you prefer to play your accompaniments, Miss Halliday?" Neil inquired, as he unstrapped her music case. "I'm not much of a musician, but I used to play for the college glee club when there was no one else around who could."

"I shall certainly appreciate it," she replied. "I hardly supposed you had time for such things. Now, if any of you have a favorite song in mind," she said, as she faced her audience, "tell me what it is and I'll do my best."

"Marchin' through Georgy!" shouted a little old man, in a cracked voice, and she sang it through to Neil's rousing accompaniment. But his fingers were gentle on the keys when a sweet-faced, white-haired lady asked for "When the swallows homeward fly." Blythe, glancing at her as she sang, wondered what wave of adversity had cast her here. Her hair, snowy white, waved softly back from a face delicate and refined and evidently beautiful at one time, but now disfigured by an ugly scar across the forehead. There

were fine lines of suffering about her mouth, but her gray eyes were full of sympathy and sweetness.

They ran the gamut of the old songs, and when "Old Black Joe" and "Carry me back to Old Virginny" threatened to bring the tears, Blythe swung into "Comin' thru the rye," for her own voice was none too steady at times. The old hymns were not forgotten, and they ended with "Should auld acquaintance be forgot," in which everyone joined, with more zest, perhaps, than harmony.

During the concert the contents of the car were transferred to a tub of cold water, and soon the whole company was on the lawn exclaiming happily over huge slices of melon. Although Blythe had been the object of distrust at first, she discovered that she had become immensely popular as she went about among them after she had sung her way into their hearts.

She found herself watching the sweet-faced old lady, who was sitting a little apart from the others, and presently went over and sat down on the grass at her feet.

By and by the two slipped away together, and in a few moments Neil's listening ear caught the sound of the piano again. He rose and walked

casually away, reaching by a roundabout path a place just outside the open window, where a clump of bushes screened him from both the house and the group on the lawn. Throwing himself on the soft grass, he lay looking up at the amethyst sky while he listened to the music within, where Blythe was playing softly a rhythmic barcarolle that flowed under her fingers like quiet water.

"I can see it all when I close my eyes," her auditor cried, when the notes ceased in a long, softly drawn chord. "The boatman pulling home in the twilight, with the water swishing against the sides of the boat and the white clouds in the west rolling back like gates of pearl. It has been so long since I have heard real music that this is a treat to my soul!"

"Listen again," Blythe said, "and you will see a butterfly among the flowers in the garden." And she began a light, dancing movement with her right hand while her left swayed the flowers gently like a summer wind. She was doing her best, under the inspiration of a sympathetic listener. Sometimes she played the instrument alone; sometimes she joined her sweet young voice to its tones. At last, evidently in response

to a request, her fingers touched a chord, and a voice, low and tender, but not her own, began:

“Lead, kindly Light, amid th’ encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.”

Neil found himself on his feet, his pulses tingling. Where had he heard that voice before? Blindly his mind groped back through the years and he saw himself, a tired little boy, lying in his mother’s arms, with his curly head nestled on her shoulder, while she sang him to sleep with this same old hymn that was half a prayer.

He heard the closing of a door, and looking out through the screen of bushes, saw the two go down the steps and back to the group on the lawn, Blythe’s arm around the older woman’s waist. Strangely white and shaken, he went directly to the car, and Blythe wondered why he was so quiet during the drive home.

When they were back at the farmhouse, with the new tire in place on the brewster-green runabout and Mr. Blake engrossed in conversation with his young friend, Neil came directly to Blythe’s side of the car.

"I must thank you and your uncle for the afternoon, Miss Halliday, perhaps in more ways than one; but at least I feel that I never should have known you as I do now but for this experience. I was just outside on the grass while you were playing for your friend," he went on, flushing a little, "and I wondered, after listening to you at the keyboard, what you must think of me for offering my services!"

"I considered it very kind of you," she answered, her level gaze on his face, "and I appreciate it much more than I do your unbidden presence later on, which you confess so shamelessly!"

"Don't be too hard on me," he begged. "Isn't the ripple of the water and the wind among the flowers and the music of the song bird Nature's own free music? Then, too, I felt strangely attracted to the lady you were entertaining. Do you know her name or history?"

"She is by far the dearest old lady I ever knew!" Blythe replied, somewhat pacified. "She is a musician herself, and I'm going to send her some of the music she likes and doesn't have there. She told me how she came to be where she is. She was returning home from the bedside of a sister who had been sick, and a terrible railroad accident occurred. Her head was in-

jured—perhaps you noticed the scar—and she thinks it must have unbalanced her mind, and she wandered away when no one saw her, for when she came to herself she was miles from where it happened, with a family of poor people, and ill in bed. They did not know who she was, and for a long time she could not even remember her own name. Then, when her memory came back and she wrote to her people, she could get no answer. She was not strong enough to work, and she did not wish to impose upon her benefactors any longer, so she left them and went—where we found her to-day.”

Blythe, gazing into the distance as she talked, did not notice that Neil had grown very white. “You did not learn her name?” he asked. But Mr. Blake, returning just then, unwittingly interrupted with a question, and Blythe had no chance to answer.

“Well, how did you like my missionary meeting?” inquired her uncle, as they drove into the sunset towards home.

“It was the best I ever attended,” Blythe replied, “and I believe I learned something of the ministry of music to-day. It makes my heart ache to see those people, though. They should be in homes of their own! Did you notice my lady

of the white hair? She isn't happy there! She doesn't belong there!"

"Very few of them do belong there," replied Mr. Blake. "They are creatures of circumstances. If you should inquire you would find that most of them came from towns or cities. They have received a living wage all their lives, but not enough more to prepare for old age. Consequently, when they cannot work any longer there is only one thing ahead of them—the alms-house."

They drove on in silence for a while, but as they mounted the crest of a hill, Blythe obeyed a sudden impulse to look behind, and saw the brewster-green runabout turn back over the way they had come.

A Severed Friendship

CHAPTER 4

A SEVERED FRIENDSHIP

GOOD afternoon, Jeannie! May I enter the shrine where Genius burns her incense?"

The young woman at the easel turned at the sound of Blythe's voice, and, rising quickly, came forward to greet the girl in the doorway. Although there was an eager friendliness about her movements, there was also a certain dignified grace that went well with the thoughtful expression in her brown eyes and the Madonna-like sweetness of her face. She was somewhat older than Blythe and there was a big-sisterly air in the way she put her arms around the girl and welcomed her in the usual feminine fashion.

"I was beginning to think you were never coming again," she said. "Did the fact that we have joined the church that we have make any difference?" She put the question directly and Blythe answered her in like manner.

"Not a bit. You have a right to your own way of believing, and if you are satisfied I'm sure I don't see why anyone else should object."

"I can't tell you how glad I am that you feel that way about it, Blythe." Jean's voice broke a little as she spoke. "It has cost us many one-time friendships, but somehow I couldn't bear to lose you, too, dear."

"No danger. But why aren't you showing me your latest production? I came to be entertained."

"It is ready for criticism, so do your worst," replied Jean with a smile, leading the way to the easel.

"Why, Jean!" cried the girl, impetuously. "It is simply exquisite! Such blending of colors and that suggestion of haze in the background! You'll be a real artist some day, Jeannie dear; but really you should go out into the country and get reacquainted with it before you attempt to paint country sunsets. Don't you know that a pig in the foreground destroys the peace of the scene for anyone at all acquainted with pigs?"

"How you do lift me to the stars and then drop me into the depths!" Jean complained, disgustingly. "That isn't a pig at all—it is a red bowlder!"

"Paint it out, anyway," advised the unperturbed Blythe. "No self-respecting farmer

would tolerate a bowlder in his hayfield, even for ornamental purposes."

"If all critics are as heartless as you, I've no show at all," said Jean with resignation, as she put away paints and brushes. "Come on into the kitchen. You are a better cook than art critic, any day."

"That is a more useful accomplishment, anyhow," Blythe replied, and soon they were busy at the household tasks over which womenfolk love to converse as they work.

"We are having tent meetings now—services every night," Jean remarked, when they were all seated around the dinner table after Ralph's return from work. "I wonder if you would care to go, Blythe."

"Why, certainly," was the somewhat unexpected reply, "I'll go if you are going."

She was sitting idly in the porch swing an hour later, waiting for the others to come out, when a handsome coupe drew up before the house. A young man, well groomed and prosperous looking, ran up the steps and stopped with a salute and a mischievous smile on his face at sight of her.

"Well, fair princess," he said with a bow, "I discovered your retreat, didn't I?"

"How did you know I came?" she demanded. "You saw me in Sardis yesterday, and no one knew I was coming until an hour before I left home."

"I know your ways," he replied, provokingly. "I haven't picked up your handkerchiefs and carried your schoolbooks and made a regular dog of myself for nothing all these years!"

"And pulled my hair and tipped over my ink bottle and made life miserable at least half the time! You are surely to be pitied, Bob!"

Yet she knew that she was very fond of him as he sat down beside her and began in his old, coaxing way, "There's a road just out of town that winds along the crest of a ridge, with a valley on either side filled with little farms and purple shadows and twinkling lights. There's a car all ready to go, with soft cushions and a chap just aching to take the wheel if he can get the best girl in the world to occupy half the front seat."

"Where's the pretty stenographer and the blue-eyed heiress and the dusky-haired violin teacher you've been telling me about?"

"Oh, bother! They're all right when you aren't accessible, but you know they are only substitutes. You wouldn't have me wasting my gasoline on the desert air, would you?"

"Certainly not. But I've promised to go with Jean and Ralph to-night, so I can't go this time."

"Where, may I ask?"

"To church—at the tent."

Bob's eyes narrowed a little and the smile left his lips. "Don't fool with those Mormons," he said. "Ralph and Jean are two of the best people in the world and they hooked them in."

"You ought to know I'm not easily hooked, Bobby." It was Blythe's turn to tease. "But if they have anything worth hearing, why not hear it? Come with us and listen, too."

"I won't," Bob said, flatly, standing up to make it more emphatic. "Chuck the whole thing and come on, please," he pleaded, changing his tactics.

"I'll confess I am curious to hear what they have to offer," she returned, without moving. "If they are such monsters as they are reported to be by some, I want to see them. It would be better than going to the zoo!"

"Very well, I'll come when your time isn't so fully occupied," he replied, shortly, as he turned away, and in a moment the car was only a moving gray shadow in the dusk.

"Where did Bob go?" inquired Jean, coming out just then. "I thought I heard his voice."

"You did," Blythe assured her, "but I refused to go for a ride, and he went away in a pet. He'll be all right in a day or two."

"May we have your help in the choir to-night?" Jean asked as they entered the lighted tent, already well filled.

"Not to-night," was the answer. "Run along and do your duty. I prefer to sit and listen."

She looked in vain for any signs of Satanic influence among the crowd as she took her seat. "If there are nonmembers here, as Ralph says there are every night," she thought, "the Saints must look very much like them, for I can't tell one from the other."

Even her well-trained ear did not detect any serious flaws in the music rendered by the choir, and when the speaker arose, a man a little past the prime of life, whose dark hair showed a fine peppering of gray, she gave him her undivided attention.

Perhaps it was fortunate that he chose to speak that night on the origin of the church he represented, giving a brief sketch of its early history, of the angel's visit to the lad, Joseph Smith, the organization of the church and the persecution it endured, and of the murder of the two Martyrs, Joseph and Hyrum. He told of the subsequent

“dark and cloudy day,” when the flock was scattered and a band of them were led away to a “salt land” by Brigham Young, where their wicked practices and the evil doctrine of polygamy cast an odium on the name of Latter Day Saint which even the pure living of those left behind, and who eventually formed the Reorganized Church, could not entirely overcome. With the difference between the two churches plainly shown and the vague prejudice she had held removed, Blythe needed no second invitation to the services the following night.

This time the speaker took for his text the words of the Lord through Jeremiah, “Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” With convincing reasoning he showed that this gospel of latter days is the same that was given to Adam in the beginning, the same taught by the Carpenter of Nazareth as he walked the shores of Galilee; that, though lost in the darkness of the ages past, was restored to earth for the last time by an angel from heaven; that again the erring children of earth were given the opportunity to walk in the “old paths” and find rest to their souls.

She learned, during the nights that followed,

of a God, warm, living, personal, who spoke to his people in all ages, whenever they drew near to him in spirit; who reveals his will in latter days as surely as he spoke to Moses from the burning bush. She felt her heart glow with gratitude at the all-enveloping love that could reach down through the ages and grant the same blessings as those enjoyed on that Pentecostal day so long ago. And always the feeling pressed upon her of following again a dim trail of childhood that her feet had stumbled upon after years of wandering.

As the truth forced itself upon her, however, she fought again that battle, old as the world, of right against wrong—that bloodless struggle with the human heart as the battleground.

As the conviction grew stronger that at last she had found what her soul cried out for, the thought of home and friends crowded in more and more insistently. Well she knew that lifelong companions would turn away; that even the woman who had taken the place of mother would give her only a cold disapproval if she linked her fortunes with this despised faith. Of her uncle's attitude she was not so sure, and the uncertainty of it added to the turmoil of soul

she was enduring, hidden beneath her usual gay, careless manner.

In this state of mind she answered the telephone one afternoon when Bob, having recovered from his ill humor, called for a dinner and theater engagement for the evening. Glad of a chance to get away from the tumult of thought which kept crowding through her mind, she accepted and was swept into an evening of congenial company, of shaded lights on cut glass and china, and later, the soul-stirring music of a famous opera. Bob was quite his usual winning self, and Blythe could not help but feel that it was good to get back to the old, luxurious life of pleasure after an uneventful summer on the farm—for during college days her uncle's generosity and her own popularity had made good times very much the rule.

Bob gave her a quick glance of approval—not the first one that evening—as she sat leaning back in the soft curve of the richly cushioned seat when he drove her home at the close of the evening's enjoyment.

"You are in a very becoming situation," he remarked. "You haven't decided to make it permanent, have you?"

"I don't know just how to do it," she replied,

rather flippantly, "unless as a taxicab driver. Do you think I'd make a good one?"

"You never do take me seriously, Blythe," he said, somewhat sulkily. "You seem to think I'm only the high school kid who told you sentimental mush and got laughed at for his pains. You don't imagine I could possibly be in earnest about anything, do you?"

"I hope so. You used to build air castles, too, Bob. Have any of your dreams come true? Then, seeing the expression on her companion's face, she added, impulsively, "Let's not spoil the perfectly lovely evening we've had together by quarreling. We ought to be grown up enough to stop that by this time."

"You have a lecture laid up for me," he insisted. "I can see it in your eye. Go ahead and get it off your mind."

"I haven't lectured you for a long while, have I, Bob? It is ungrateful to do it now, but perhaps it will be good for your soul. What are you doing in the world, anyway? Are you in the bank because you are necessary to the business, or because you are the grandson of the president? Are you making yourself a necessity or learning new and better ways of doing things in the business world? And why did you stop

studying law? You were doing well, weren't you?"

"You're a merciless interrogator, Blythe," he answered, rather uneasily. "I stopped law because the future of it was too far ahead. I wanted more immediate results. I'm getting them at the bank."

"I'm not so sure. Do you think you have mastered the work there well enough to get another position if you were suddenly thrown on your own resources?"

"I shouldn't starve, at least. Let's talk about something pleasant. What's on for to-morrow?"

"Going to church morning and evening. I'd rather not arrange anything for the afternoon."

"Where are you going—down to hear the Mormons again?"

"Yes, if you insist on calling them that."

"It is my turn to ask questions now. Are you getting interested in what they have to offer? Do you know what your people would think if they were to know you are going there? Do you want to be the third or fourth wife of some Mormon preacher?"

"I am interested, Bob. They preach the Bible. And you are mistaken about their being polygamists—I believe you know better. The

church in Utah has practiced it, but you won't find a people on earth with any higher ideals than the Reorganized Church."

"I don't care to hear about them. They surely have a way of getting people in. Helene was greatly taken up with them once when she was visiting a school friend who belonged, but we soon got the foolish idea out of her head when she came home—with Ted Worthington's help."

"Ted Worthington would soon get the idea of religion out of anyone's head," Blythe replied, distastefully. "Helene's foolish if she marries him!"

"Why? He's well off and a good lawyer with a growing practice. He may be a little gay at times, but he'll get over that. But, seriously, why don't you let me take you to church to-morrow? Our pastor here is a good one, and now that the old crowd knows you are in town everybody will expect you to be there."

"Tell them where I am, if they ask. I have promised to sing in the morning."

"I suppose you are making yourself very useful," Bob said, bitterly. "For heaven's sake, Blythe, think what you are doing!"

"I am thinking, for the first time in my life,

I believe. Could anything induce you to go to the tent some night?"

"No!" he replied, shortly. "I'm not very keen about religion, anyway. It helps keep one respectable in the eyes of the world to go to some church—that's all. The Mormon Church doesn't even do that!"

Realizing the futility of argument, Blythe said no more, but the careless pleasure of the evening was gone, and again her brain seethed with a tumult of thought. The rest of the ride was finished almost in silence, and when they spoke it was of other things.

As they turned down the home street she chanced to glance out of the window of the car and saw a small, dust-covered, brewster-green runabout just ahead of them, but before she could glimpse the driver it turned into the yard of a brown bungalow and lost itself in the shadows.

The Parting of the Ways

CHAPTER 5

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

THE next morning Blythe was at the unpretentious but well-kept church where Sunday morning services were held, in company with Jean and Ralph, and in time for the Sunday school session. Only once before she had been one of the young people's class, but she was interested and ready to come again.

After this was over and the opening song of the church service sung, she took her place beside the young pianist for the solo she was to sing. It was one she had often sung before and she could not quite explain why she had selected it, but as the accompanist struck the opening chords she felt a strange, sweet thrill sweep over her, and she sang with such a spirit of inspiration as she had never felt before:

“Last night I lay a-sleeping
There came a dream so fair,
I saw the New Jerusalem
Beside the temple there.
I heard the children singing,
And ever as they sang,
Methought the voice of angels
From heaven in answer rang.”

Was she sensing more fully the ministry of music, or did the sweet Spirit of the Master rest upon her and thrill through the tones of her voice? She pondered it as she took her seat, the spirit of peace and exaltation still enveloping her.

Glancing over the sea of faces before her, she gave a start of surprise. Near the back of the room sat the white-haired lady of the almshouse, with a clear-eyed, dark-haired young woman on one side and Neil Cameron on the other, adjusting a wrap about her shoulders and giving unmistakable evidence of having a personal interest in her welfare.

Blythe sat vainly trying to unravel the mystery until the opening words of the speaker caught her ear: "I shall talk to you a little while this morning on the gathering and the building up of Zion. You are nearly all Latter Day Saints and therefore are, or should be, vitally interested in this subject."

He quoted from the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, showing that the people of the Lord were to be "gathered in unto one place, upon the face of this land, to prepare their hearts and be prepared in all things, against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth among

the wicked." That here Zion, the New Jerusalem, should be established with love as her corner stone and righteousness and equality among the chief stones of her foundation. Here should be a busy, happy people; none idle, yet none ground down by the treadmill of poverty and unceasing toil. Purity must reign, for not until Zion becomes in reality the "pure in heart" shall she "spread herself and become very glorious, very great, and very terrible: and the nations of the earth shall honor her and shall say, Surely Zion is the city of our God."

He was not the speaker who had occupied at the tent the previous weeks, but one holding the office of bishop, and by virtue of his calling and experience he was not an impractical dreamer, but a man of business ability. He emphasized the fact that the law of tithing and consecration must be fulfilled; that Zion can be redeemed only in the appointed way; the observance of the law as laid down by the great Master Builder; that the idler shall have no place there, and the work must be accomplished by the mutual labor and sacrifice of all.

Listening in wonder, Blythe realized that there were heights in this strange work that her mind had not before grasped; that should she, in all

sincerity, cast her lot with this people, it must be with an utter consecration of time, of talent, of all she possessed. She believed with all her heart and felt with a surge of joy that here was something definite to work for—something real and tangible; yet she thought again of home and friends and sent up a silent prayer for guidance and help that she might not be tried beyond what she was able to bear.

When she reached the door after services, Neil and his two companions had left the church and she saw him helping them into the runabout. Then he turned, glanced at the outcoming stream of worshipers as if searching for some one, and seeing her, came quickly back.

“I went out to call on you the day after you left home,” he said, as he returned her firm hand-clasp. “May I see you this afternoon? There is a special reason.”

“I know of no reason why you cannot,” she returned, smiling.

“Thank you,” he replied, and was gone.

She was swaying lazily in the porch swing and carrying on a spasmodic conversation with Jean and Ralph between pages of a late magazine when he drove up in the runabout. He and the Randalls were old friends, which fact Blythe

had discovered, and for a time the talk was general. Then a party of friends came by and stopped to chat a moment, and under cover of the diversion Neil made quick use of his opportunity.

"When we can manage a polite get-away," he said, impulsively, "let's run away to the country. Are you above riding in my little car?"

"Not at all," she replied, her eyes sparkling at the thought of a ride in the fresh September air. "Jean's class of girls is coming to practice something before long, and Ralph is dying to read this magazine, so we can escape with great ease and grace." This they presently did.

"Do you know," she said as the car sped along, "this is the first time I've been out in the country since I came. If it were not that I have formed the habit of going to church and dislike to stop, I should have gone home before this to get a breath of fresh air."

Neil gave her a keen glance, but before there was time for a remark she turned to him and asked pointedly, "Are you a member of the Latter Day Saint Church?"

"I am," he answered.

"I have never heard anyone mention it," she said with a smile, "but ever since you sent Mr.

Titus away in such a hurry that day I've half suspected you of some duplicity."

"And when you saw me in church this morning your worst suspicions were confirmed, I suppose," he returned. "Did you recognize my companions?"

"One of them. I was somewhat out of sorts because you gave me no chance to speak to her."

"I wanted to explain first—it would have been awkward there. She is my mother, and the other my sister, Margaret."

"But why—" Blythe began, then stopped abruptly.

"Why was she in the poorhouse? She told you, herself. We searched everywhere but could find no trace, and at last decided she had been killed in the wreck and her body one of those charred beyond recognition in the fire that followed. The shock and worry hastened father's death, and Margaret and I left the place we were living and went away, I to school and she to her hospital training. We had but just moved there when mother went on that ill-fated trip, and I suppose that made it more difficult for her to find us.

"She knew me that day at the poorhouse, but she knew that I was with friends and so spared

me the possible humiliation of a public explanation. You can imagine some of the strength of character my mother possesses from the self-control she exercised that day," he added with pride.

"I love your mother," Blythe said, briefly. "Go on, please."

"When I saw her last her hair was red-gold—it is not gray with age now—and she did not have that deforming scar across her face, so I did not recognize her; but when she sang 'Lead, kindly light,' I think I knew then. But I wanted to have time to think and find out whether or not you knew anything about her. I think she told you what she did for a purpose—my mother is very wise—and after you and Mr. Blake were gone I went back. She was waiting for me down by the gate alone, and when I came she put her arms around me and cried as if her heart were breaking—but I knew she was shedding tears of joy! We came here that night to Margaret, and you can imagine the reunion that followed."

There were tears in Blythe's eyes as he finished, and she did not speak at once; then she said simply, "I am very glad. I wonder if your mother would care to see me again."

"She wants me to bring you as soon as we get back to town."

"I shall be glad to go. I wonder," she went on after a pause, "why so much of the bitter comes to some and seemingly none to others. Sometimes I'm almost ashamed that my own life has been so full of sunshine—I have hardly had an ungratified wish!"

"Your time will come, no doubt. Life is seldom all smooth sailing—sooner or later we strike the breakers."

"But I don't want to," she insisted. "I am a coward. I don't like to think of meeting difficulties and trials. I want my friends to be happy, and most of all, I want to be happy myself. Did you ever hear such a selfish and wholly irresponsible statement before?"

But Neil only smiled. "When they come to you," he said, "you will meet them like the good soldier you are, and when they are over you will be glad they came to you and wonder why you never appreciated real happiness before."

Then, because the world was young to them, they forgot the serious things of life and enjoyed the drive to the full.

"I wonder if this is the road Bob described to me," Blythe remarked, suddenly. "It is on top

of the world, isn't it? And there are little farms and purple shadows on either side. Have I waited two whole weeks in vain for this! Never!"

"I'm afraid you will have to explain," Neil said, politely. "Is Bob friend or enemy?"

"He is both," she declared gayly. "He invited me to go for a drive one night and I refused—for a very good reason. Then he stayed away two whole weeks to punish me and took me to the opera last night as a recompense. Bob's punishments never did me any good, anyhow," she finished, airily.

"I am more bewildered than ever!" Neil complained. "Is he a cousin, or a big brother, or a fiance? He seems to have some claim on you."

"He is none of the three—just a boy I grew up with. We hunted eggs and went nutting and snowballed and coasted and jeopardized our lives several times daily, usually in company with Ralph and Jean and Roger and Marian. His surname is Weston, and he works in the city in his grandfather's bank. He is the son of the foremost lawyer of Sardis, whom you may have met."

"I have met them both, I believe, now that you mention it," he replied. It was at the end of his tongue to inquire if she and this Bob Weston intended to follow the example set by the

other four, but he reflected in time that it was none of his business and that Blythe would probably consider the question somewhat impertinent. So, instead, he offered to gather some of the purple asters and yellow goldenrod that lined the roadside and which she was admiring audibly at that moment.

She scrutinized him rather closely from the shelter of the runabout as he came back with his arms full of the golden and purple blossoms. He was not so handsome as Bob, she decided, but there was a fine strength about his face which Bob's had never possessed, as he stood with bared head in the sunshine.

"Some of them need their faces washed," he apologized, as he piled them into her lap. "This roadside dust is very hard on their complexions."

Then, as the sun was low in the west, they turned their faces towards the city and drove home in the quiet autumn dusk. The breath of evening was still warm and sweet as summer air, and Blythe breathed it gratefully as they slipped past the brown fields and patches of woodland where the trees were already putting on their colored dresses—a growing portent of coming change.

At the brown bungalow that evening she

found Mrs. Cameron awaiting her coming with a heart-warming welcome. She met Margaret, tall and well-poised, with a soothing calm in the very touch of her firm hands. There was another inmate of the home, a plump, auburn-haired young woman whom Margaret introduced as Elizabeth Wilcox, a public-school nurse of the city.

"Betty and I were companions in misery at bachelor-girl housekeeping until mother came," she explained. "Now she keeps the home fires burning while we are away at work."

They went to church in the runabout that evening, Blythe, Margaret, and Neil, Mrs. Cameron being weary and Betty obligingly offering to stay with her. The sermon was not destined to set at rest the emotions that had been distressing Blythe the past week, for the speaker took for his text the first and second verses of the twelfth chapter of Romans, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Much of the sermon that followed was lost upon her; the words of the text kept repeating themselves over and over in her mind. Had she rendered unto God a reasonable service? She confessed to herself in shame that her service had been given to the goddess of worldly pleasure. And there was solemn warning in the words, "Be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Surely her mind had been renewed during these weeks, when the light of inspiration had been turned on the Scriptures; when words, hitherto not understood, had burned with new meanings, and she had been able to prove to her own satisfaction by these same Scriptures what was "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Yet some power held her back, until she was ready to cry out at the pain of the conflict within her.

When Neil left her at her door after services she went directly to her room, calling a brief good-night to Jean and Ralph as they came up the walk from the street. Long after the house was quiet she sat on the broad window seat looking out into the moonlit night. Careless and happy though her life had been, she realized to-

night that under the surface a current of vague unrest and longing was moving that must sometime burst through and carry her into new and untried waters.

“Why did I go that first night?” she said to herself with a rush of bitterness. “Why should I leave my church and my associates? Yet, deep in my heart I know this is the true church, in full harmony with the gospel of Christ. But am I strong enough to face the world and be called a Mormon! And my home—would it be my home any longer? I know it would not. Would it be ingratitude to those who have given it to me? And yet, to my Maker I owe all—my reasonable service!”

So the struggle went on far into the night. The peace of the outer world seemed to mock the wild tumult in her soul as she fought her battle there alone; but at last she flung herself to her knees in a passion of tears and prayed brokenly for help, and when she arose the victory was won, and a cool breeze—or was it the touch of a watching angel’s hand—came in through the window and soothed her to slumber.

And as she slept she dreamed. She stood at the parting of the ways, and before her stretched two paths. One, broad, carpeted with roses, and

cool with tempting shadows, turned towards the left, and in the distance she could see a mansion lifting its proud head to the sky ; but as she looked more closely she beheld sinister shapes lurking among the cooling shadows, and sharp thorns and treacherous pitfalls beneath the roses. Then she turned towards the other, straight and narrow and paved with pearl, whereon was carved the same name as that above the door of the little white chapel she had attended that morning. It was flooded with golden light, and above it glowed the words, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Far away, at the end of the road, she caught the gleam of a city of gold, and with a song of joy on her lips she set her feet in the narrow way.

An Unchanged Decision

CHAPTER 6

AN UNCHANGED DECISION

JOHN BLAKE sat on the sunny porch taking an after-dinner rest and waiting for the first splutter of the noisy little Ford that brought the daily mail. When it came he put his glasses on that he might be able to look it over on the way back, and sauntered leisurely down to the mail box. There were several letters; but one square, cream-tinted envelope addressed to him in Blythe's round, girlish hand received his first attention. He tore it open and read.

"Dear Uncle and Aunt:

"I arrived at a momentous conclusion last night and I am writing to-day to tell you about it. I received your letter, Aunt Lillian, reproaching me because I was not at church the day Mr. Titus was in the city, but the fact is, I have been attending the services of the Latter Day Saints and have decided to join that church. I know this will have much the same effect as a bomb bursting at your feet, but I have thought about

it—yes, and prayed over it—and my way is clear at last. Forgive me if this seems ungrateful to you—believe me, I have no ingratitude in my heart, and I am, as always,

“Your affectionate

“BLYTHE.

“P. S. Please do not blame Ralph and Jean for this. I have been going because I wished to go, and made up my mind to take this step without any outside interference.”

There was another note which Mr. Blake found folded into one of the tiny canoes he had taught her to make years ago. This was evidently intended for him alone, for it began:

“*Dear Uncle John:*

“This is private if you wish to keep it so. I know how Aunt Lillian will feel about this—I wish I knew you wouldn’t care too much. It would be too much to ask for your consent, perhaps, but if you still love me a little and don’t think me utterly crazy, I should appreciate knowing it.

“Your own

“BLYTHE.”

When John Blake finished reading the letters he did a strange thing; he climbed two flights of

stairs to the big attic and poked into dark corners and turned over the miscellaneous articles that such places usually contain until his nose was tipped with dust and his iron-gray hair covered with cobwebs. Finally he found a small walnut trunk, black with age, carried it down, and deposited it between the seats of the "chummy" roadster, covering it carefully with a robe.

When his wife drove up in the gray coupe which was her especial property, he was pottering about the yard, but he left his work at once and gave her Blythe's letter. Then he stood watching the conflicting emotions of amazement, despair, and anger on her handsome face as she read it through.

"John Blake, you must not allow her to do this thing!" she cried. "She is insane; hypnotized by those people! You must go down at once and bring her home! It must be prevented, some way!"

"I shall do nothing to prevent it," her husband answered, quietly. "She is of age and a free-born citizen with as good a set of brains as anyone I know. She has only come into her own, Lillian, and you know it."

"I believe you've been an accomplice to this." Mrs. Blake was almost in tears. "You've prob-

ably known it all along. If you won't go, I will—or better yet, I'll have Mr. Titus see her. He is going to the city this afternoon."

"Titus is apt to come home with his wings singed," returned Mr. Blake, dryly. "She doesn't take much stock in his opinions."

"Surely she will have some respect for the cloth, at least. John, I'm simply wild about this," and she retired hastily to the house and the telephone. Then her husband got out the big roadster and drove calmly into Sardis.

Meanwhile Blythe was having her own perplexities. She realized that she had made a fatal step so far as her home life was concerned, although her mind was calm and untroubled after the assurance that had come to her the night before. She posted the letter to her uncle early in the morning and came back just as the rest of the family were sitting down at the breakfast table.

"Do you know of any position open to a book-keeper or stenographer, Ralph?" she asked as she unfolded her napkin.

Ralph looked somewhat surprised. "Are you thinking of launching yourself upon a business career, fair cousin?" he inquired with a smile.

"It is likely to be necessary," she replied. "I

expect to be baptized very shortly and I don't intend to afflict you and Jean as a guest the rest of my life."

"Forgive me for teasing, Blythe." Ralph had grown suddenly grave. "I am very glad to hear what you have told us, but I know, too, what it will mean to you. I suppose this will be laid to our charge, Jean," he added, looking across the table at his wife.

But her brown eyes were quite untroubled. "We have had enough laid to our charge that a little more doesn't matter," she said, "and our home is yours, Blythe, as long as you wish to stay."

"I wish to work," replied Blythe with decision. "I thank you, Jean—you know I'd rather stay here than anywhere else, but I'm going to pay my way if I do. I am glad Uncle John insisted on giving me an education to work with," she added. "If you don't know of any vacancy, Ralph, I shall start out to-day to find a place."

"My assistant bookkeeper expects to leave for California before cold weather," he answered; "perhaps in a week or two. I wonder if you would care to work at the factory."

"To be sure," she said. "It would be much

pleasanter working with you than a stranger. It seems almost too good to be true!"

"Of course Mr. Aldrich does the hiring," he interposed, "though my opinion goes a long way with him. But there has been some trouble with the employees there and—sometimes a strike is serious. I shouldn't like you to run into danger, Blythe." He hesitated a moment, then as she seemed about to speak, continued, "Come out to the factory with me this morning and get your application in if you feel that you want the place. Perhaps you can tell more about it when you see Mr. Aldrich and look things over."

So she finished her breakfast hastily and they set out together. The large implement factory where Ralph was bookkeeper stood far out, near the edge of the city. It did not look particularly prepossessing that first morning as they stepped from the street car—a miscellaneous collection of structures, belching out clouds of smoke, while the shriek and roar of a switching freight train on the track near by added to the confusion.

"I feel a little nervous," Blythe confessed, as they walked the short distance from the car line to the main building. "If this sort of an interview affects me, what must it be to a girl who

is back a week on her rent and has the soles worn off her shoes!"

Ralph glanced at her quickly, but she was not jesting. She was looking instead at an overdressed slip of a girl across the street, whose complexion was unnaturally pale, whose cheeks were brilliantly rouged, whose dark eyes were darker still under their blackened lashes.

"That is Fannie Evans, a local character," he explained, following her glance. "She isn't the kind you would care to know, Blythe."

Blythe's face was troubled. She had seen too little of the seamy side of life to be untouched by sin and poverty. On the corner a blind man stood begging, and she dropped a coin into the tin cup he held and met Ralph's smile with a half defiant look.

"How do you know he isn't poor, with a wife and family dependent?" she demanded. "His card says so."

"He lives down the street a little way," was the reply, "in a house quite as comfortable as ours, and his wife wears twenty-dollar georgette waists. I saw her buy one."

"How can you tell how to give?" asked the girl, somewhat despairingly. "Surely all beg-

gars don't live in modern houses and buy twenty-dollar waists for their wives!"

"They do not." Ralph's face was grave now. "You must either give indiscriminately or not give at all. The first is hard on your pocketbook; the second is hard on your heart."

There was no more time for moralizing, however, for the factory door was before them and Ralph led the way up the stairs to his own special sanctum. It was above some of the noise and there was a glimpse of the river and green trees far away, as Blythe noted through the window; but most of the view was shut out by a tall warehouse just across the street, beyond which was a huddled group of dilapidated houses, the homes of the less prosperous of the factory workers.

"Well, how do you like the prospect?" Ralph, who had been furtively watching her as he arranged his work for the day, broke the silence.

"It might be more pleasing," she admitted, "but I won't beat a retreat now."

When Mr. Aldrich, a brisk, middle-aged man appeared, she stated her errand as soon as they were introduced.

"Have you had any experience?" he asked, looking at her sharply from behind his horn-rimmed spectacles.

"No office experience." She felt rather small and inadequate as she answered. "I understand bookkeeping though and am fairly rapid at stenography and typewriting. I can also spell most of the everyday words of the English language and punctuate my sentences," she added with a smile.

Mr. Aldrich returned her smile, and she discovered that his keen eyes could twinkle kindly behind his spectacles, but he only said as he hurried away, "Mr. Randall will file your application and it will be considered along with the others."

She was a victim of mixed feelings as she left the factory and boarded a home-bound car. She abhorred street cars, and the thought of riding to and from her work day after day gave her a sense of aversion. But the morning was freshly beautiful and her spirits rose again during the walk home from the car line. She stopped to watch two or three squirrels frisking among the fallen leaves and smile at several happy babies in neighboring dooryards. Then a familiar voice hailed her, and turning, she saw her old pastor hurrying to overtake her.

"Why, Mr. Reid," she said, delightedly, "I didn't know you were in the city."

"I exchanged pulpits with the pastor here yesterday," he explained. "I did not see you at church."

"I wasn't there," was the reply. Then she added, a little uncomfortably, "I suppose you have been hearing all about my apostasy."

"Yes, from Bob Weston. He seemed honestly troubled over it and wished me to see you."

"That was very kind of Bob," she said, ironically. Somehow she felt rather nettled that Bob should have had a hand in this.

"Mr. Reid," she continued, "do you know anything against the Latter Day Saint Church? Honestly, now? If you do, I wish to know it."

"I do not," he answered, frankly. "I have known many of the members of the church and have a high opinion of them. They are honest, clean, and law-abiding, of course with some exceptions. Their doctrine seems strange in many ways, but they have more of the actual Scriptures in their belief than any other church I know of."

"It seems to me," she said with a smile, "that Bob has sent rather a poor missionary to reclaim the lost sinner. If you think they have more of the Scriptures than other churches, why aren't you one of them?"

"You were always hard to manage, Blythe,"

he replied, returning her smile. "It may seem rather a strange thing for a clergyman to say, but religion is something like patent medicine. You have to change the formula as often as you find you need some other ingredient to make it more effective."

"I see your meaning," she answered. "You think these people have merely adapted more of the Scriptures than other churches; that it will be only a question of time until the rest of the churches catch up, so to speak."

"You are putting it very plainly, Blythe, but that is really what I mean. What difference does the mode of baptism make, for instance, or some of the other principles they insist on? Why run the risk of severing your friendships and your family relations by uniting with this church when you can believe all the Bible you wish and still retain your old membership?"

"Because I refuse to belong to a church that either teaches in opposition to the Bible or ignores some parts of it completely," she said, warmly. "Because I believe that this church is the only true one. Its very existence depends on the principles written down in the Scriptures. It is patterned after the church in Christ's time. Therefore, if the mode of baptism was by immer-

sion in Christ's time, as the Bible so plainly shows, why do it some other way now?"

"You are too far gone to reclaim, I'm afraid," he told her in mock despair. But he listened as they walked down the street together while she told him something of her new belief, of her doubt and indecision of the night before, and the dream that followed it.

"I see your mind is made up, Blythe," he said as they parted, for the train on which he was to leave the city was almost due. "I am not one to tell you that you are absolutely wrong. That is a matter which must be between you and your God. If you are sure you are right, go ahead. My blessing goes with you, my dear child."

She saw that her defense had moved him, and with sudden conviction she turned to him and said, "The time is coming, Mr. Reid, when your church will fail to satisfy you, also."

She was alone in the house that afternoon, Jean being away on an errand, when the telephone rang and she found herself coupled with Sardis. She waited in some trepidation until she heard Mr. Blake's voice on the wire.

"Hello," he said. "Am I talking to Blythe?"

"Yes, Uncle John."

"All right. When are you going to be baptized?"

"Why—the arrangements are made for to-night," she replied, somewhat disconcerted at the unexpected inquiry.

"If you care to wait until to-morrow night perhaps I can be there," he said, and Blythe gasped.

"Uncle John," she demanded, "how do you feel about it, anyway?"

She heard him chuckle softly. "I'm talking from the central office in town," he said, "so I can be quite honest about telling you. I have been expecting it for a matter of fifteen years, so I'm not greatly surprised. I'll be down to-morrow afternoon," he went on. "If you care to wait, all right. But be prepared for an advance from the enemy's quarter in an hour or two. Good-by."

She was still seeking an explanation of this amazing conversation when the doorbell rang and she answered it to find herself face to face with the Reverend Claude Titus.

"Good afternoon, Miss Halliday," he said. "If you have a few moments' leisure I should like to talk to you."

"Certainly." Blythe knew at once why he had come, as she led the way into the living room.

"I just arrived in town and came here at once," he continued. "Your aunt called me up just before I left and told me you were thinking of joining—the Mormons!" The gesture with which Mr. Titus delivered the words expressed unspeakable things. "Knowing, of course, that you do not know the depth of their iniquity, I came to warn you before it is too late—before you are drawn in and down beyond all reclamation!"

"Mr. Titus," Blythe said, quietly, looking him squarely in the eye, "if you do not know that there is a decided difference between the Reorganized Church, the one I contemplate uniting with, and the people of Utah, you are an extremely ignorant minister!"

Mr. Titus's appearance expressed mingled surprise and horror. "Have you become so enmeshed in their toils," he exclaimed, "that you no longer give any credence to the opinion of a minister of the gospel? Your aunt is ready and willing to forgive all if you will come home at once and forget these things; but if you should ally yourself with these people she intimated that her doors would be forever closed against you!"

"I have expected as much," was the calm reply, "and my decision is unchanged."

Seeing no signs of repentance, the minister rose with dignity. "I am very sorry to have such disheartening word to take to your aunt and all your anxious friends in Sardis," he said. "You will find doors closed against you that have always opened wide. You will meet people on the street who will turn away lest they be seen speaking to you. You will——"

"Stop!" Blythe was speaking now, and sternly, too. "Since I have been in the city, Mr. Titus, I have been hearing, quite accidentally, a little of your history. A friend of Mrs. Randall lived in the city called Macedonia, where you posed as a minister of the gospel and where you did things so unbecoming to a minister that you were forced to leave. If I cared to start an inquisition, decent people would refuse to speak to *you* on the streets of Sardis, and the town would soon be made too hot a place for your continued residence!"

The face of Mr. Titus turned somewhat gray. "You cannot prove it!" he cried, but there was a hint of fear in his voice. "When you have nothing more to say in defense you start in bemoaning your would-be friends and rescuers. I shall leave you to your fate—you are past all redemption!"

The stern lines of Blythe's face were relaxed into a half smile as she closed the door behind him. "Why have I so suddenly become the object of such tender care?" she mused. "If friends and emissaries can accomplish it I shall surely be turned from my purpose! But how thankful I am that Uncle John is left to me. I can't understand him, at all!"

The next afternoon, true to his word, he appeared in the "chummy" roadster with the small black trunk still tucked in between the seats.

"Open it, Blythe," he said, as he set it on the floor of the hall and handed her a small brass key. With a strange sensation she turned the key and lifted the lid. There seemed to be only papers, old church magazines, most of them, but as she lifted them out she found many books underneath, with either her father's name or her mother's written on the flyleaves.

"All the books of the church," she said, turning over the leaves of an old Book of Mormon. "Please explain, uncle. Where did you get this? Do you mean to tell me that my parents were Latter Day Saints?"

"Your father was a minister of the gospel," Mr. Blake replied, "and your mother the best Latter Day Saint I ever knew. When they died

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your aunt took you into our home only on condition that you should know nothing of their belief. I was almost converted to it myself, so I did not agree willingly; but I wanted you with all my soul, and there was no other place for you to go, so what could I do? When your letter came I knew the prayers of your mother were being answered—and I was glad. Then I hunted this up—I thought perhaps it had been destroyed, but I found it in a dark corner of the attic—and brought it down, for I knew you would be glad to get it. There are other things in it you will treasure, old letters written by your father and mother, and photographs of them, and things they loved. You will want to leave it here with Jean, perhaps, for safe-keeping.”

“Mr. Titus was here yesterday,” Blythe said rather irrelevantly, and told her uncle of his visit.

“Your aunt was quite beside herself when he came back with his report—which did not include quite all you have told me. I happened to be in the next room when he called to tell her about it. She told me after he left that you could never set foot inside the door again; and I promised to break up the next missionary meeting and throw

Titus bodily out of doors at the first opportunity if she persisted in her determination."

"Uncle John; you didn't!" she cried, between laughter and tears.

"Yes, I did," he said, with rather a shame-faced smile. "I got rather vehement, I'm afraid. But as Lillian dreads a scene above all things, she gave up, and I came down to take you home."

"But don't you see I can't go, Uncle John? Knowing she feels as she does I would never go and run the risk of making the whole household miserable. Jean and Ralph want me to stay here and I mean to work—I have my application in now as Ralph's assistant."

So, although he was disappointed, Mr. Blake agreed with Blythe that perhaps it was best for her to remain where she was.

"Did you wait for me to come, honey?" he asked, looking down at her where she still sat on the floor before the little trunk.

"Yes," she replied, "and I am so glad I did! It will seem like a joyful home-coming, now that you have told me what you have. I know now why it has all seemed so strangely familiar to me—I had not entirely forgotten the things I learned as a little child."

So she entered the water with a firm step at

the font of the little chapel that night, and John Blake stood watching with a dimness before his eyes and an old urge in his heart which grew stronger as he listened to the closing words of her confirmation at the service a little later, "Thou art indeed recognized as a child of God, and with Israel thou shalt find thine inheritance. And thou shalt be a chosen vessel in the work of the redemption of Zion and the building up of the New Jerusalem, the city of our God."

A View of Commercial Life

CHAPTER 7

A VIEW OF COMMERCIAL LIFE

BLYTHE awoke next morning at the first glimmer of dawn and lay in the delicious peace of awaking day, thinking over the events of the past weeks. She was still possessed with a feeling of exaltation, the afterglow of the good Spirit which had bathed her soul at her confirmation the evening before, a feeling that possessed her for many days. It was well, perhaps, for the sun had not set upon her first day of the new life until she needed all the strength that was in her.

"I am going home with you after all, Uncle John," she announced at the breakfast table. "There are a number of things at home that I shall need, so I'll go with you and come back on the evening train."

Before they left, however, she was called to the telephone, and Bob Weston's voice spoke. "Where in the world have you been, Blythe?" he demanded. "I called for you all Sunday afternoon and evening at Jean's and at all your old haunts, and nobody knew where you were!"

"I was visiting friends," she replied rather coldly. She resented Bob's possessive tone somewhat. "I have been here most of the time since."

"Well, I called to see if you would go to the Worthingtons to-night. Daisy saw me to-day and told me to be sure to bring you. Swell hop, you know. Did you get the invitation she sent you?"

"Not yet," she replied; "perhaps it will come to-day. But I'm going home with Uncle John this morning."

"Oh, put it off a day. Helene is down and intends to visit you and Jean. You can go home together then in a day or two."

"But I'm coming back to-night," she was forced to admit. "I'm going home to pack up."

"To pack up! What in thunder is the rum-pus? Blythe, you haven't joined that church and broken with your family, have you?"

"I have joined the church, yes."

"And now you have to leave home!" Bob seemed to be trying to swallow his wrath. "What are you going to do now—work in a ten-cent store?"

But the receiver had clicked, and it took long and persistent ringing to bring Blythe back again.

"I say, Blythe," he pleaded, "come anyway, to-night. No one needs to know you've turned Mormon for a while, at least. We'll have one more good time together, anyway."

"No; I've reformed."

"You don't mean to say you've quit dancing!"

"Yes. I've decided it isn't worth while."

"Well, I'll be hanged! You always have. Is your new church any better than the old one?"

"If I didn't think so, I should never have changed."

Bob was silent a moment, and when he spoke again his voice was like ice. "Then I shall be compelled to tell them all why you aren't there to-night. I warn you, you won't be the popular Miss Halliday you have always been very long, at this rate." Then he changed his tactics again. "I shall meet you at the train to-night. No, you needn't expostulate. I'll be there, and you had better be prepared to go, for I'll take you anyway."

Blythe turned away, weary and heartsick for the moment. She knew her home-going would be an ordeal, and she wondered if she would still be strong enough to answer no when Bob should meet her at the train that evening.

Mrs. Blake was away when they reached home,

however, and she drew a breath of relief. Hester's welcome was quite as warm as ever, and she left her preserving kettle to look out for itself while she hovered around Blythe and helped with the packing. Mr. Blake came upstairs as they were finishing and helped move the big trunk which, with two bags, contained most of Blythe's worldly goods. Then he closed the door of her room, locked it, and put the key in his pocket.

"It's here when you want it again, honey," he said, rather brokenly.

Blythe wondered if it were chance that, as they were driving out into the road, a brewster-green runabout should appear suddenly in a cloud of dust and stop with a howling of brakes to let Neil Cameron out.

"I didn't know you were home, Miss Halliday," he said, evidently quite well pleased to have made the discovery.

"I am going back on the five o'clock train," she answered, and he gave her a quick glance and asked no questions.

"I intend to drive to the city this evening," he informed her. "Would you care to go in the runabout?"

Would she care to go? Here was deliverance at the eleventh hour! But her reply was politely

reserved, although she accepted with inward gratitude.

On the way she told him briefly of the occurrences of the past few days. "Only three days ago," she said, "I told you I wished my friends to be happy and myself as well; and then I voluntarily plunged myself into ostracism and my friends into despair."

"I think you are very brave," he answered, sincerely: "the more so, because you knew just what would happen if you did it."

They rounded a curve just then, and in the distance the city appeared, gray and mysterious in the twilight, a dream city of the dusk, with all its misery and sin and squalor veiled by the softening mantle of charity; and watching it, Blythe wondered how long the iron hands of time and circumstance would hold her there, away from the country home she loved.

The next afternoon she received a visit from Helene Weston, Bob's sister.

"Bob was awfully put out last night," she said during the course of conversation. "He went to the station to meet you, and when you weren't there he telephoned Daisy he couldn't come on account of a business engagement—fancy a busi-

ness engagement that could keep Bob away from a good time!"

"He takes altogether too much for granted," Blythe replied, decidedly. "I told him I wouldn't go, and it really serves him right that a chance came along and I came down in a car. I shall not apologize."

Helene wisely decided it was time to change the subject and did so. "Are you still having meetings at the tent?" she inquired. "I have been hearing about them."

"Yes, all this week, but no longer, I think." Jean, who had stepped into the next room, heard and answered. "Stay all night, Helene, and go with us this evening." Which invitation was somewhat unexpectedly accepted.

Blythe observed that Helene gave the speaker strict attention during the sermon that night and that she seemed to be thinking deeply as they walked home together after the service; but not until they were alone in Blythe's room, which she shared for the night, did she speak of what seemed to be troubling her.

"Blythe," she said, "I am as much a Latter Day Saint at heart as you are. I learned all about their belief last summer when I was visiting a school friend. Then father found out about

it and sent for me, and you know the rest. I'm engaged to Ted, and it would mean giving everything up if I should join them now. What shall I do—what can I do?"

"There is only one thing to do," Blythe said, "and no one but you can do it. Ask God to give you strength to take the right way as you see it and stick to it."

"But can't you see what it would mean?" Helene paced up and down the room in her agitation. "It would mean not only giving up my family and home, but Ted, too. He would never consent for his wife to belong to an unpopular church like this and—I love Ted!"

"And yet," Blythe reminded her gently, "what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

"I know," Helene answered, "but I can't think to-night. Perhaps in the morning I shall know better what to do."

When morning came, however, she had reached no decision save that she was going home. "I must have more time to think it over," she insisted. But well Blythe knew what the result would be under the influences of her home and friends, and she was not surprised a few months later to read in the local paper of Sardis of "one

of the most brilliant social functions of the season, the marriage of Miss Helene Weston and Theodore Worthington, a successful young lawyer of the city."

One morning, a day or two after Helene's visit, Ralph called her after reaching the factory. "Miss Emerson is ill to-day," he said. "Can you come out and help?"

"Of course," she replied. "I'll be glad to have something to do."

In a short time she was at the office and busy at work. So engrossed did she become that she quite forgot the view from the window, and the street and factory noises.

"You're all right," Ralph told her that night as they went home. "If I have any influence with Mr. Aldrich you'll get the place."

As a matter of fact she did get it and went to work the next week. And although she sometimes grew weary and disheartened, for the most part she was happy and contented. She was glad to find that Margaret Cameron was the factory nurse, and a warm friendship sprang up between the two girls. Often Blythe went along when Margaret received a call after office hours, for she was learning to both love and pity the factory people, and many a gift of fruit and flowers, or

something more substantial, found its way to Margaret's patients. It taxed Blythe's income sometimes, and she was learning for the first time in her life the real worth of money. Her uncle had sent her a generous check after her return from home, but after tithing it she thriftily banked it as an emergency fund and set to work to make her salary cover expenses, with the result that very often the money she had put away for some little luxury of her own went to the fruit vender or the groceryman.

"I wish I knew how to ease pain as you do," she said rather enviously to Margaret one evening, as she stood watching the latter bandage the burned limbs of a child and saw the look of pain grow less on the little face as the soothing ointment was applied.

"You are learning," was the reply, "and really, it does not matter so much what we do if we do it well—you in your corner and I in mine."

Blythe smiled at the words of the old song she had almost forgotten. Then she grew grave again, as she looked around the bare little room with its broken windows and unplastered walls and into the strip of grassless yard beyond.

"Margaret," she said as they went home together on the street car, "the men are on the

verge of a strike at the factory. They want more wages, which the company can hardly afford to grant, considering the returns that are coming in now. I know, having access to the books. But I know another thing—that if those people had pleasant, comfortable homes to live in and a little more opportunity to feed their souls they wouldn't be so full of seething unrest. The company owns all of those shanties back of the warehouse, and if the owners would invest a few thousands in repairing and making them habitable—but they won't. Ralph broached the subject to Mr. Aldrich, and though he sympathizes with the idea, the owners do not—he has tried to get them to see it, himself.”

“I know,” Margaret replied, thoughtfully. “The owners think they are doing their full duty to the employees by hiring a nurse to look after them, but so many of the accidents and illnesses are caused by ignorance and lack of sanitation that sometimes I get almost discouraged and think there is no use in trying. It is much like healing a sore in one place only to have it break out in another.”

“You are a veritable angel of mercy,” Blythe cried, warmly. “But I wish I could do something. It will only increase the misery if a strike

is called, but one can hardly blame them, with winter coming on and the cold winds blowing away the heat through the cracks as fast as they pile the hard-earned fuel in. If they could only realize what they really need, instead of the perpetual cry of more wages."

"The question of more wages is a problem, nevertheless," Margaret said. "I know families that can hardly exist on what the father earns—large families of six or more. The children go to work as fast as they are old enough, denied the heritage a free-born American child has a right to, a childhood and an education."

"I see," Blythe replied. "The man with a family of eight receives the same as the one with no family at all. That really seems only fair, for one man's work should be as valuable as another's. One trouble is, the man with a family failed to look ahead and save up a little, and the one with none is making the same mistake to-day. In fact, I don't suppose there is much to save," she added, thinking of how her own salary had dwindled away since last pay day.

She sat silent for a while, looking out of the car window. It was one of those dreary autumn nights with a wet mist falling so thickly that even the street lights looked damp and cheerless.

"The whole economic system is out of joint," she decided, finally. "I know that while the manufacturer sometimes receives excess profits he cannot always grant the increase labor demands, for his own expenses are heavy and his returns very often light. I know that organized labor is often unreasonable, demanding more than it is actually worth sometimes; that improper methods of marketing and distribution are one cause of the high prices the consumer has to pay and the low prices the producer receives, with the corresponding unrest and dissatisfaction everywhere. But what can we do about it?"

"There is only one remedy," Margaret answered, "and the world is not yet ready for it—the acceptance of those rules the Lord has laid down for the establishment and operation of Zion. Strikes are not a cure, for they cause more misery, and I suppose, on the other hand, that misery is the cause of some of them, at least. Take the case of our own factory, for instance. There is a certain class of the employees who could stand a few days or weeks of idleness without suffering; those who have a little laid by, who live on the well-kept and prosperous-looking streets a little distance away from the noise and grime of the plant. But we know what it would

mean to the shanty dwellers—and there is where the trouble always starts. Their homes are miserable makeshifts; there are innumerable hungry mouths to feed, and many of them are foreign born. What more could an agitator wish? When a man's family is cold and hungry, he will listen to anything. And when trouble is once started, all members of the union must necessarily get in line, whether they want to or not. This is just as true when a nation-wide strike is called as when there is local trouble."

"We debated all those things in school," Blythe said, with gentle sarcasm, "and decided that we had discovered the cause and effect, and that as soon as we were admitted into the world of business we should at once find the remedy—inexperienced young idiots that we were! The more I rub up against the real thing the nearer I am convinced that the trouble lies primarily in the innate selfishness of mankind. Not that all mankind is selfish, but the ones who are trying to right the wrongs of the earth are so much in the minority that they make very slow progress. The giddy old world, childish with age, only cries, 'On with the dance,' and keeps on with the mad whirl."

Margaret sat listening with a questioning

smile. "I wonder if you are the same girl Neil described to me a few months ago—who seemed to have discovered the fountain of perpetual happiness," she said.

"That was years ago," Blythe replied, musingly. "No, I am not the same. I feel sometimes like a made-over garment that has lost its freshness. I used to think life was all sunshine—that misery and want existed only in storybooks or some remote corner of the earth. I know now that it is at our very doors, but I am happier, much happier, doing what little I can to help."

Life was far from being all shadows for Blythe, however. Her newfound faith was a constant source of joy to her, and she had learned to love the people who attended services at the little chapel. Here she found her musical talent of unfailing worth, and here she became a prime favorite with young and old. There were good times also, many of them, when the socially inclined met at the various homes or in the church basement for informal gatherings, and she wondered sometimes, looking back, how the old life had ever satisfied her.

In her work at the office she was finding pleasure, almost contentment, in the realization that she was doing a day's work from sun to sun. She

succeeded in gaining Mr. Aldrich's consent to establish a small mission Sunday school for the factory children, where the superintendent of the local Sunday school was only too glad to gather a little band of them every Sabbath afternoon and, with the aid of his helpers, teach them the gospel story. The number grew, for Blythe and Margaret were gaining the friendship and confidence of the mothers and fathers, and soon the empty room which had been given over to the school bade fair to become too small for its purpose.

Gradually the murmurs of discontent grew less. After due deliberation, the company had granted the advance in wages the employees demanded, and life settled back to its old channels. But Blythe, going with Margaret on her errands of mercy, knew the revolt was still seething, and waited with trepidation for the outbreak.

Neil sometimes came to the office on his brief trips to the city. If Ralph was absent he quietly helped Blythe with her work or sat reading until she was ready to go. Then he would take her home in the runabout, stopping for Margaret if she happened to be at work among her patients. Blythe wondered why he had the freedom of the factory until she learned of his friendship with

Mr. Aldrich and that he had at one time been one of his most trusted employees.

One December day she received a call from Bob. His visits had been more and more infrequent of late, and he had never before been to the factory.

"I came out to see what kind of a place you have to work," he said. "And I find you here in this hole! You might have had a place in the bank if you had asked for it."

"I am busy and happy," she replied briefly, clicking away at her typewriter. He sat watching her quietly for a few moments, noting the soft curve of her cheek, the droop of her long lashes as she bent over her work, the tendrils of curling, golden hair, like yellow sunshine about her face.

"Blythe!" he burst out at last, "you're altogether too pretty for a working girl. Why don't you cut out the whole miserable business and live like the little aristocrat that you are?"

She caught a glimpse of the shanties through the window, sitting forlornly among blackened, soot-covered snowbanks, and her soul revolted within her. "The day of the aristocrat is passing," she said. "I am proud to be one of the workers, for when all is told they are the only

ones who have ever helped to make the world any better."

"I suppose so; and then the world turns around and gives them a kick. Blythe, you know I want you!" he said, leaving his chair to come and stand at her side. "I've never been able to think of you as any other man's wife. No, not even since you've joined that abominable church; not even since we can't talk together fifteen minutes without a clash of opinions. Why is it, I wonder?"

He was plainly miserable, and Blythe felt a wave of pity for him. "It is because our viewpoints have changed, Bob," she said, gently; "or, rather, mine has changed and yours has not. But I have some work to finish to-night, and my time is my employer's now. I'll talk to you when I get this done."

"It seems to me you are rather particular to whom you talk!" he said, hotly. "Don't I know that Cameron comes up here and wastes your valuable time whenever he feels like it? Oh, I know. I might have expected it—you have made a wholesale exchange of old friends for new. Perhaps that is why you turned Mormon—because he is one. Perhaps——"

But he was cut short by a flame of anger from Blythe that sent him away with white face and

set lips, though she was sorry for her loss of temper before his footsteps had ceased echoing down the corridor. "Poor Bob," she said to herself; "he's worried and upset or he would never have said what he did."

Then she put her head down on the desk and cried a little, for she realized better than he, perhaps, that their paths were growing farther and farther apart as surely as night follows day.

She felt the holiday season approaching, with a sense of indifference, almost of dread, but she threw herself into the preparation of a cantata at the church and a tree for the factory children, and forgot, in a measure, her homesickness. Then Mrs. Cameron invited the three to eat dinner at the brown bungalow, and she found the day passing swiftly and not unhappily.

When she reached home that night she found in her Christmas mail another generous check from her uncle and a long box with the name of an exclusive importer and dealer on the cover, which, when she opened it, proved to be a gift from Bob—a necklace of exquisitely carved ivory and jade, so beautiful that she gasped at its loveliness, so suggestive of the luxury it symbolized that she felt a little pang for the moment.

With it was a card which said, "My peace offering and many good wishes. Bob."

Her first impulse was to show it to Jean; her second, to put it back into its case and address it to Bob, together with a brief note which read:

"*Dear Bob:* Believe me, please, when I tell you why I am returning this—because even our lifelong friendship cannot warrant my acceptance of such a valuable gift as this. I truly appreciate the thought that prompted your sending it, and hope you will not misjudge me too much.

"Sincerely,

"BLYTHE."

With the coming of the new year there came severe weather and its attendant suffering in the homes of poverty. Again the murmuring began, aggravated by the laying off of the night shift on account of an unexpected slackness of orders.

"Oi tell yez we don't have to sthand it!" cried a burly Irishman, father of five, one of whom was down with pneumonia. He was speaking to Blythe, who had come out to relieve Margaret, for the influenza was raging and the latter was almost worn out with work and loss of sleep. "Here we sthay like hogs in a house wid cracks ye kin trow a cat tru."

"Pat, I wish you had asked for better homes last fall instead of higher wages. You might have gotten them then," she said, though in her heart she did not believe it.

"We need more wages, too," he muttered. "Next time we'll ask for the houses."

But evidently Pat was overruled, for when the demand came, it was for shorter hours and an increase in pay, perhaps in the hope of providing work for the unemployed night shift. This the company flatly refused, and the strike became a reality. When the whistle blew one morning there was no sound of tramping feet, and the big plant was silent and empty.

"I have received orders to hire outside help if the employees strike," Mr. Aldrich said grimly to Ralph and Blythe, who had appeared at the usual time. "There are plenty of men in the city who need work. We won't have to shut down long."

True to his word, he had the work going again in a few days, though with a much smaller force than before. There was no open hostility, but the old laborers stood in knots and watched the new in sullen silence as they crowded in and out of the buildings, and Blythe, looking into their

faces, knew that revenge would come sooner or later.

The change made the office work heavier, and often she and Ralph and Mr. Aldrich stayed and worked long after the factory had closed for the night. One night they were at work later than usual, Blythe alone in the office where the other two had left her, to visit some other part of the plant. She was busy at her books when she heard the closing of a door downstairs. She was startled for an instant, for the doors were always locked at night, but remembering that it was probably Ralph and Mr. Aldrich returning, she thought no more of it and went back to her work. Presently she became aware of a pungent odor in the air, the scent of burning wood; and filled with sudden alarm she slipped from her stool and threw open the door into the corridor. Thin wisps of smoke were drifting up from the lower floor, and Blythe's first thought was of escape. Then she remembered that the alarm must be turned in or the whole plant would go. Like a flash came the thought of the huddled shanties, and the havoc and horror that might follow if the fire reached them, and without hesitation she closed the door and went to the telephone.

But the dry interior of the old building burned

like tinder, and when she stepped out into the hall again it was filled with suffocating clouds of smoke, and she could see the red glow of fire below. Choked and blinded, she was forced to turn back and find some other way of escape. Another door led from the office into a storeroom beyond and her hand was on the latch when the door into the corridor was burst open and Neil Cameron stood beside her. Why or how he had come she did not know—she only knew that she felt no surprise at his presence there, that calm and courage came to her as he caught her arm and hurried her through the storeroom and into a side hall that was comparatively free from smoke. He seemed to know where he was going, for, feeling along the wall, he found an outer door and threw it open. At their feet was a sheer drop to the pavement, thirty feet below.

“I thought there was a fire escape here,” he said in disgust, and turned hurriedly back into the storeroom, returning with a coil of rope he had found with the aid of a pocket flash-light.

“Take hold with your hands to ease the strain on your body,” he directed, knotting it quickly around her.

“But you, Neil!” she cried, “What will you do?”

He caught, for a fleeting second, the look in her eyes, and his heart leaped with something which was not fear.

"I'm coming too, dear—I'd follow you to the end of the earth if I knew you wanted me to come," he said gently.

She shuddered as she looked down, for the smoke was already drifting between her and the snowy pavement; then taking a fresh grip on herself she grasped the rope and was lowered to safety below. With swift fingers Neil fastened the end he was holding and came down hand over hand just as the belated fire engine appeared, and they joined the crowd of excited people who had collected and were yelling themselves hoarse at the rescue.

The rest of the events of the night were like a chaotic dream to Blythe—their frenzied search through the crowd for Ralph and Mr. Aldrich and the return of the two from one of the other buildings, quite unaware that anything was wrong until the noise brought them out to see; the fight of the firemen to save the rest of the plant, and their final control of the fire. When the excitement was over, she found herself shivering with cold and the reaction, and heard Neil reproaching himself for his neglect, as he

wrapped her carefully in his big coat and whisked her away in the runabout to Jean, who knew nothing of the disaster until they came home with the news.

A Discussion of Stewardship Ideals

CHAPTER 8

A DISCUSSION OF STEWARDSHIP IDEALS

WHEN Blythe opened her eyes next morning, she was lying in her own white bed and Margaret Cameron was moving about putting the room to rights.

"I suppose you imagine I'm sick," Blythe observed, eyeing the antiseptic young woman with disfavor.

"You are under the care of a trained nurse by Mr. Aldrich's orders, at least," Margaret replied with a smile. "He says you are the most valuable employee he has and wants you well taken care of. You and Neil are in all the papers this morning."

"There should be a price on the heads of all reporters," Blythe said. "I'm perfectly all right this morning, though. Just tired. How is Neil, and why aren't you at home looking after him, like a dutiful sister?"

"He's feeling almost as good as new, except that he got singed a little last night."

"Why, how did he get burned?" asked Blythe in surprise. "I didn't."

"Going up the stairs to find you, I suppose," was the answer. "It isn't serious at all. Just a few blisters around his head and face and some missing hair and eyebrows. He'll be all right. He wanted me to come to you. Betty's looking after him," she added, with a mischievous look in her eyes.

"You had better look after him yourself," Blythe advised, rather resentfully. "I'm all right, only just—tired," she finished drowsily, and in a few moments her regular breathing told Margaret she was asleep again. In fact, she was quite worn out with the work and anxiety of the past few weeks, though she had not realized it, and welcomed a chance to lie blissfully in bed and rest.

"She seems to be all right," Margaret told Jean downstairs. "No sign of cold, even. Just let her sleep now. There's nothing for me to do, so I'll run along."

"I wish you'd stay and answer the telephone," Jean declared. "I've been absolutely overwhelmed with inquiries this morning, even from Sardis. Uncle John saw the account in the morning papers and was anxious about it, of course."

By the next day Blythe was downstairs, quite herself again, except for an unusual weariness.

"Neil telephoned just before you came down," Jean told her. "He and his mother are coming over if you feel like having company."

"I don't see why I shouldn't," Blythe declared. "One would think I'm convalescing from some dangerous illness, the fuss everyone makes."

At the brown bungalow Neil was having a rather bad time with himself as he ran out the runabout and prepared it for the drive to Sardis, for there he intended to go when he had paid his respects to Blythe. Viewed in the sober light of day, the words he had spoken to her the night before seemed rashly unwise.

"Why didn't I wait?" he groaned to himself. "I can't press the matter now, for if I do she will think I'm cad enough to expect her to marry me out of gratitude. It seems to me I'm in a decidedly awkward position any way I can fix it." Then his mind came back to the only question that, after all, made any real difference. "I wonder if I was right last night—if she really cares."

Blythe's greeting was so naturally and unaffectedly like herself, however, that he wisely resolved to let the matter rest and talk about something more tangible and less dangerous.

"I was out to the factory this morning," he told her. "The main building is only a pile of

ruins; and it is a good thing, too, for it was nothing but a trap. I don't see how they ever saved the others, as close as they were together, but they are safe and everything is quiet there now. Do you suppose the fire was accidental?"

She shook her head and told him what she knew. "I am sure some one came in and set it inside," she said. "No doubt they thought everyone was gone, for we always keep the doors locked after closing time and we were later than usual last night. The intruder must have forced an entrance in some way. I have felt sure some sort of trouble was brewing ever since the new laborers came, but I do not think there was any general plan among the men to do this, for no level-headed person would consent to such an insane act. It must have been done by a few of the more inflammatory ones—some of the shanty dwellers, no doubt."

"Neil," she asked after a moment's silence, "how did you happen to be there so late last night? I have been wondering about it all day."

"I don't know," he replied, thoughtfully. "I had no intention of coming ten minutes before I started. Then something told me I was needed, and I left Sardis as soon as I could get the car out of the garage. I telephoned Jean from

mother's and she said you were at the factory. I thank God I went there at once!"

She was quiet a moment, listening absent-mindedly to Mrs. Cameron and Jean in the next room as they discussed some new beauty in the latter's windowful of blossoming plants. Then she turned to him and said, "I haven't thanked you, Neil, because I knew you wouldn't care to have me; but you are a friend I am glad and proud to own!" And Neil very nearly forgot his resolution of an hour ago as he clasped the small hand she held out to him.

Not many days passed until work was resumed at the factory. New machinery was installed temporarily in some of the smaller buildings and plans were made to begin on a main structure as soon as the weather permitted. Many of the old employees came back and asked for work, shocked into the fear that they would find nothing to do the rest of the winter by the disaster that had threatened to annihilate their homes as well as their means of a livelihood.

A temporary office was fitted up and soon Blythe was at her old task. The bitter weather had moderated, and with the warmer days of February there was less suffering and disease among the factory people, so she found her time

less fully occupied. Margaret, too, welcomed the change, for the work of the winter had been a severe strain upon even her sturdy constitution, and she felt a decided need for rest.

One evening Blythe was curled lazily in a big arm chair, with a pile of books and magazines beside her, waiting for Ralph and Jean to return from a trip down town, when the door bell rang and she found that her caller was Bob Weston.

"I have been intending to come ever since the night of the fire," he said. "It doesn't matter why I haven't, I guess."

Somehow he did not seem quite like the Bob she had always known. His face was a little paler and he seemed unusually quiet. He answered her questions and tried to keep up his end of the conversation for a while, but presently he broke off and asked abruptly, "Are you going to marry Neil Cameron, Blythe?"

"Why, no—not that I know of," she replied, somewhat disconcerted by the unexpected query. "Why do you ask me that?"

"Oh, no reason in particular. I just wished to tell you that you might do worse. I was out there the night of the fire—oh, I know you didn't see me, but I was there, nevertheless. Cameron went up those flaming stairs at three bounds. I

was just behind, but they held me and wouldn't let me go. 'There's no use in your risking your life, too,' one man told me, and thought he was being kind. 'If there is anything to be done in there Cameron will do it!' I'd have given my right hand to have had him say that about me!"

What an admission for Bob to make! Blythe lay back in her chair, watching him in wonder as he paced up and down the room.

"I saw you again just as you reached the ground—I saw you watching him come down the rope, with your heart in your eyes! You have never looked at me like that in all the years I have known you! And so I've decided there's no use—is there any hope for me, Blythe?"

She shook her head without speaking.

"I thought as much—I just wanted to be sure," he said, "and so I'll go my way and you will go yours. I've lost you by my own worthlessness, I suppose. But the world is large and I may find something worth while to do, yet. If I do, it will be due to some of the jolts you have given me, perhaps!"

"Don't, Bob; please don't!" she begged. Here was a new Bob; one she could not understand. "Have I been so utterly heartless?"

"No, you have not been heartless. I needed

something hard to wake me up. I'm going away soon—I don't know just where, yet, but the bank stifles me! So this is my farewell. I've been trying to come for weeks but—I couldn't. Good-by, Blythe; good-by!"

Not trusting herself to speak, Blythe held out her hands to him. He looked at them, lying in his own, for a moment; then he lifted first one and then the other to his lips, and went away into the night. And when Jean came up to Blythe's room to chat a moment before going to bed, she was much concerned to find her in tears.

With the coming of warmer weather John Blake drove often to the city. Usually he went on Sunday, that he might attend the morning service at the white chapel—for the seed sown in his heart years ago was beginning to swell and grow. There was another chapel somewhat similar in Sardis, and very often the "chummy" roadster was seen parked outside, in spite of Mrs. Blake's protests.

"I don't interfere with your religion, Lillian," her husband would assure her calmly, "and you have no right to interfere with mine."

So it happened that he might have been seen in the city one bright spring day, with most of the available space in the roadster filled with Easter

eggs and candy rabbits for the factory children. He always took Blythe out to the mission Sunday school when he was in the city, and his appearance was a never-failing source of delight to his small acquaintances, with whom he was becoming quite intimate. The school was growing and there were adult classes now, for the fathers and mothers were being drawn in by the interest of their children.

To-day a thunder shower threatened, and as soon as the service was over the cars which had brought the superintendent and his helpers out hurried back into the city. With Blythe at the wheel, Mr. Blake holding his breath beside her, and Jean and Ralph tucked in behind, the big roadster made amazingly good time on the return trip, and they reached the curb in front of the house just as the first rush of rain came down.

"What fun!" cried Blythe as they raced madly up the walk to the shelter of the porch. "It reminds me of the time when I was young! Why, we have a visitor!" she added, as Neil arose from the porch swing and came forward with a book in his hand.

"I knew you would soon be back, so I made myself comfortable," he said. "The runabout refused to work this morning, but I coaxed it up

and came this afternoon—and found everyone gone and the doors locked over home.”

“Well, why didn’t you wait on your own porch?” inquired Jean, inhospitably. “Is ours more attractive?”

“Aren’t you afraid of hurting my feelings, Jean?” he asked, with a grin; but Jean only laughed teasingly and led the way into the house, for the rain was pouring now, and bringing with it the chill of an early spring shower.

“What have you been reading, Neil?” Blythe inquired; then, as he held up a small book bound in flexible leather, “Oh, the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.”

“Yes,” he replied; “I have been looking up all I can find on the subject of Zion. The theme has a never-failing attraction for me—perhaps because, as Mr. Blake told me once, I am a dreamer,” he added with a smile.

“I should like to hear what you have learned about this Zion that is to be established,” said John Blake with sudden animation; “it interests me. I am something of a dreamer myself, you know, and if there is any way of making my dreams come true by putting them into practical operation, I wish to know it. Everywhere I go among the members of your church I hear this

same subject discussed. It seems to be moving upon the minds of all. It is one of the things we did not hear much about when I went to church years ago. Is it a fanatical dream, or is there really something divine back of it?"

"If there is anything divine back of the work," Neil replied, "there surely is divinity behind the Zionie plan. It is not the dream of a fanatic, but a plan given by the God of heaven and earth. We have nothing to fear if, in the establishment of Zion, we follow closely the law laid down by the Master Mind. We have even the proof written down in history that it will succeed, for the city builded by Enoch ages ago was governed by the same laws of equality and brotherly love that are given us to-day. In the thirty-sixth section of the latter-day revelations and the seventh chapter of Genesis, Inspired Version, we read that the Lord in those days called his people Zion because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.

"You see there are many qualifications required of the people to whom this wonderful task is given. They must be humble and full of love; they must be unselfish, willing to impart of their substance to those in need. In the Fishing River

revelation we find that the lack of these qualifications hindered the redemption of Zion in the beginning of the latter-day work."

"What about this law of equality?" inquired Mr. Blake. "I have been doing a little studying myself and in one place in the Book of Covenants I find, 'In your temporal things ye shall be equal, and this not grudgingly, otherwise the manifestations of the Spirit shall be withheld.' "

"The law of equality is one of the fundamental principles by which the establishment of Zion is to be accomplished," Neil answered. "Let me read to you from the fourth verse of the eighty-first section: 'You are to be equal, or in other words, you are to have equal claims on the properties, for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships, every man according to his wants and his needs, inasmuch as his wants are just.' The fact that this was given to certain individuals does not confine its application to them alone, for reading on, we find, 'And all this for the benefit of the church of the living God, that every man may improve upon his talent, that every man may gain other talents; yea, even an hundredfold, to be cast into the Lord's storehouse, to become the common property of the whole church, every man seeking the interest of

his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God."

"Do I gather from this, then, that my neighbor's frying-pan, for instance, is as much mine as it is my neighbor's?" Mr. Blake wished to know.

"I do not understand it so," Neil replied, smiling. "The Saints are to receive inheritances. This fact runs all through the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. When I receive an inheritance it is mine—no one can take it from me; no one has a share in it unless I bestow it upon him. These are to be obtained by purchase, and if I should go down and purchase a tract of land in the region of Zion it would be as much mine as if I should purchase it right here. If I could pay for it in full, I should be expected to consecrate that which is left, if there is any, after the just wants and needs of myself and those dependent upon me are supplied, and after I have deducted the amount necessary for the carrying on of my business. Also, under the law, my increase must be tithed. If I am not able to pay in full for my inheritance I am immune from the law of consecration until it is paid for, but this does not excuse me from paying my tithing. If I am capable of managing more than my inheritance, by stewardship may be enlarged indefinitely, but

always that which is produced above my just wants and needs returns to the church to be used for the mutual benefit of all."

"I see how this would tend towards equality," said Mr. Blake, thoughtfully. "There would be no piling up of surplus wealth by individuals, but a distribution of it where it is most needed. But suppose sudden illness or unexpected expense should come up? Where would the man be who had consecrated all of his surplus?"

"I cannot believe that he is expected to shave his bank account so closely that there would be nothing for an emergency," Neil replied; "but if he should find that he needed more he would certainly be entitled to assistance from the church if he had been keeping the law by which it is governed. You will remember that I read to you a while ago that the Saints are to have equal claims on the properties, for the benefit of managing the concerns of their stewardships. When we are all working on a stewardship basis, happy in seeing our brother prosper as we ourselves, loving one another to the extent that we can overlook petty faults or go to one another in kindness when larger ones appear, then we shall find that the largest obstacle has been removed in the establishment of Zion, for Zion is 'the pure in heart.'

"But if all have an equal claim on the properties, wouldn't there be a good chance for graft? All men aren't honest, you know? Wouldn't it be easy for a man to get a hand-out whether he deserved it or not?" Mr. Blake was evidently seeking exhaustive information.

"Not while the law of the Lord is enforced and our men of the bishopric have the keenness of vision they possess to-day. The law says plainly that the 'idler shall not have place in the church,' and precautions are being taken by those in authority which make it increasingly hard for an unworthy individual to get by. In harmony with the instruction given in section seventy-two, anyone wishing to locate in the region known as Zion must file an inventory of that which he possesses with the bishopric and take with him a certificate signed by the bishop or three elders of his home district to present to the presiding bishop, if he desires to be accounted a wise steward and receive an inheritance in Zion.

"We have great things to look forward to," he continued with increasing earnestness, "when the lands are purchased as the Lord commanded them to be so many years ago. We shall see mills and factories built that will give employment to thousands of our people. They will not be

ground down under the heel of big business, but will be given a chance to work for that God-given right—a home of their own. I see no reason why they should not be allowed to buy shares in the plants where they are at work; it would give them an income for old age and take the burden of much of the handling of money from the bishop. These details will be worked out, however, as the need demands and the Spirit of inspiration directs. Just now there is little work there for the day laborer, and the demand is for consecrated men and women who will go with the one ideal in mind of assisting in the building up of Zion. Men of some means are needed, those who are able to make their own way without being a burden upon the church, but most of all are needed those whose hearts are filled with love and the spirit of service."

Outside the spring rain was pouring, and Mr. Blake arose and walked to the window to look for a break in the clouds.

"You may as well prepare to stay here tonight, Uncle John," Jean observed. "It has already rained enough to make the road slippery."

"Yes, sit down, uncle," Ralph urged. "I'll confess I'm learning something new right along. If this plan succeeds, as we have every reason to

believe it will do, we shall be relieved of the worry and suffering caused by such occurrences as we had here last winter. Strikes and walkouts will be unknown in this land of brotherly love, for every man will have the interest of his neighbor at heart as much as his own."

Blythe, listening with visions in her eyes, said nothing at all, but she was seeing in fancy a row of neat cottages, each in the midst of a grassy yard, where the factory children romped and played, with roses in their cheeks and the blessed sunshine above them, undimmed by any drifting pall of smoke. She saw the men and women of the factory busy and happy at their work, the cloud of sullen resentment gone from their faces, knowing they were no longer slaves of toil but free-born citizens, earning a livelihood by the sweat of honest labor, even as their brethren and sisters all around them were doing. And in her heart she rejoiced that she had found this gospel of wonderful promises and high ideals.

"Do you think the time has come for the gathering to begin?" Jean inquired.

"It has already begun," Neil replied, "but the command should be heeded, 'Let not your gathering be in haste nor by flight; but let all things be prepared before you; and in order that all

things be prepared before you, observe the commandments which I have given concerning these things, which saith, or teacheth, to purchase all the lands by money which can be purchased for money in the region round about the land which I have appointed to be the land of Zion, for the beginning of the gathering of my Saints; all the land which can be purchased in Jackson County, and the counties round about, and leave the residue in mine hand.' I am reading now from the ninth verse of section ninety-eight. You see, the first step must be the purchase of lands—Zion must first be established agriculturally. This will be accomplished in two ways—purchase by individuals who are moved upon to go and buy lands for themselves, and purchase by the bishopric of the church with funds obtained through consecration and offerings. When every member of the church obeys the financial law, then will the redemption of Zion be quickly brought about, for there will be enough that these other industries may soon be established. Then and not until then, will the invitation be extended to all, 'Come and gather unto Zion, for there is work for all,' and the promise be fulfilled, 'It shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from

among all nations, and shall come to Zion singing, with songs of everlasting joy.' ”

“You mean,” observed Ralph, “that the church is not in a position now to give help or work to all who wish to gather; that no one should go who does not have some definite means of livelihood in view, or some special work to do when they get there.”

“That’s it, exactly. And right here let me say, that those who desire or expect to aid in the building up of Zion must prepare themselves to be able to do some useful, constructive work. We should not sit down and make no effort to get ready to go. We should endeavor to prepare ourselves, both spiritually and financially, for the Lord says in section fifty-eight, ‘It is not meet that I should command in all things, for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant,’ and further on, ‘He that doeth not anything until he is commanded and receiveth it with doubtful heart and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned.’ So we must move forward trustingly as the way opens before us, for the Lord has said that Zion must be redeemed and the fulfillment of prophecy warns us that the time is short. If we fail or step aside the work will roll on just the same, for the

time is surely coming when 'Zion shall flourish upon the hills, and rejoice upon the mountains, and shall be assembled together unto the place which I [the Lord] have appointed,' even though chaos and darkness reign outside her boundaries."

"There seems to be some difference of opinion among the Saints as to how far the boundaries of Zion extend," Blythe observed, breaking her silence for the first time. "Some believe the whole of this great country of ours is included—that it is foolish to gather into one place at all."

"We are told," Neil replied, "that in time to come the meek shall inherit the earth, and the glory of the Lord cover it; but the one thing emphasized now is to 'purchase the lands in Jackson County that can be purchased, and in the adjoining counties round about.' We find mention of it again in Doctrine and Covenants 102, the revelation given on Fishing River.

"The Lord still declares that he changes not when in section 127 he tells the church: 'As the saints have heretofore been instructed in reference to the gathering, they are now again admonished that the gathering must not be in haste, nor without due preparation, and must be done in accordance with the revelation given to the

church upon Fishing River and in accordance with the counsel and advice of the elders of the church whose duty it has been made to counsel and advise the saints.'

"Oh, if only those early Saints had heeded the admonition, how far along might we be now in the establishment of Zion! Even yet some use the command not to gather in haste as an excuse to rest upon their oars in this great work ahead of us. It seems to me that now is the greater need of haste—we have wasted so much precious time! Not the kind that drives men and women helter-skelter into Jackson County, but a wise, systematic, intelligent haste that begins in careful and prayerful preparation and brooks no delay when the opportunity for action arrives.

"Then shall we not be oppressed by the knowledge that when the time of trouble and great tribulation shall come upon the earth we shall be found without a place of refuge. Even now we can see the dark storm clouds rolling across the blue sky of our vision. Even now nation looks with watchful eye upon nation; even now labor and capital stand ready to fly at one another's throats, while murder, theft, and violence stalk abroad through the land.

"Surely, with the events of every day unrolling

before us, we cannot declare much longer that the day is far distant when 'every man that will not take up his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.' We cannot expect this place of refuge to rise up suddenly when the need requires. We have been warned of how and when it must be done, and of the need for it. And the promise, blazoned in letters of hope, comes to us, 'It shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the most high God; and the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it; and it shall be called Zion. . . . And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another. . . . And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion singing with songs of everlasting joy.' " (Section 45.)

"I am glad the rain kept us in this afternoon," Mr. Blake said. "I have received new views from our talk here, as well as having some of my own confirmed. The time is coming when my name will be on the records of the church if my investi-

gations in the future be as satisfactory as they have been in the past."

"I am glad to hear you say that, Mr. Blake," Neil assured him, heartily. "The church needs such men as you—and you need the church."

With that the informal meeting broke up, for the rain had ceased, and the sun peeping through the clouds in the west told them that the afternoon was waning.

A Vision Realized

CHAPTER 9

A VISION REALIZED

SPRING had burst into being at last. Every passing breeze bore a hint of blossoming hedgerows and orchards sweet with bloom, while the fresh new grass spread like an emerald shadow over all the earth—no, not all. It stopped in dismay at the edge of city pavements and the hard-packed earth around the factory shanties, sending only a spindling blade or two as an advance guard that seemed a pitiful mockery of the springtime.

Blythe, going to work day after day, felt a wild desire to run away to the country lanes that she knew stretched beyond the ceaseless roar of machinery and the clang and rattle of electric cars and freight trains. She kept a big bunch of lilacs from Jean's blossoming bush on the office desk and wondered impatiently why they made her more poignantly homesick than ever.

One day a sound came to her ears as she bent over her books, a sound that she did not recognize for a moment—the honk of wild geese. From the open window she saw them, a flying

wedge against the blue of the sky, following the urge of instinct to the shores of some reed-girdled northern lake. She watched them out of sight, the wanderlust of the spring stirring in her own veins. Then, indisposed for the moment to go back to work, she glanced down to see what was occurring below. Crossing the street from the direction of the shanties, she noticed the same girl she had seen on the street that first morning she visited the factory. Her cheeks seemed to have lost some of their color, her eyes were darkly circled, and she walked slowly, as if from physical weakness. Watching her idly, Blythe wondered where she was going; then she saw a strangely familiar brewster-green runabout drawn up to the curb, and realized with a start that this was the girl's destination, for she walked directly to it and climbed into the seat.

The back of the car was towards Blythe and she stood trying vainly to remember whether or not this were indeed the number of Neil's machine when he himself came from the same direction with a bundle in his hand, stepped into the runabout, and drove away down the street.

For a moment Blythe stood half stunned, trying to summon a reason for this surprising incident, and finding none. The fact that she did

not even know Neil was in the city witnessed against him, for not in many weeks past had he failed to see her when he came. With a sensation of numbness she went back to her work. So this was the man she had come to regard above other men—the man whom she had believed to be as clean as she herself was pure! Hot tears came to her eyes and she dashed them away as she heard Ralph returning to the office. But all the brightness was gone from the spring day, and the scent of the lilacs sickened her. One moment she was sorry that she had been called to the window; the next, she told herself sternly, that she was fortunate to have it so, for neither by example nor precept had John Blake taught her to believe in a double standard of morals, and she had come to womanhood with a keen appreciation of what true manhood was worth, and set a standard she refused to lower. So, when calmness came back, she resolved to demand an explanation and abide by the consequences, and, in the days which followed, went to work with redoubled energy that she might, in a measure, forget.

“You are foolish, Jean,” she said, almost irritably, when that young woman insisted that she

looked ill, was working too hard, and needed a rest. "I've hardly been sick a day in my life."

When Neil did come, a week later, there was company in the house, and in spite of herself the change in her manner towards him was so marked that he went away hurt and wondering, without giving her any opportunity of seeing him alone.

One day, strangely enough, she went to his mother for comfort. She found her sitting on the porch among her flowers, her hands busy with some needlework. Dropping into a big wicker chair, Blythe sat watching her a while in silence, a silence that Mrs. Cameron understandingly left unbroken.

At last she spoke: "Mrs. Cameron, I seem to have come to the end of things lately. Ever since I have started trying to live the life of a Christian and saint, things have been harder than they ever were before."

The older woman drew Blythe gently from her chair to the rug at her feet. "Lay your head back in my lap and let me smoothe your temples while we talk. Of course things have been harder, child. Satan always gets to work when he knows we are really trying to do right—and perhaps the loving Father knows that we need

some difficulties and trials to make us stronger. Would you like to tell me about it?"

"No, I don't think I would," Blythe answered, honestly. Then after a pause she went on, "If you should suddenly discover, or have every reason to believe, that people you trusted and respected weren't at all what they seemed to be—wouldn't it turn your world topsy-turvy for a while? Wouldn't it shake your faith a little?"

"It is very hard," Mrs. Cameron replied. "That is one of the hardest things I have had to meet—the discovery of flagrant human weaknesses in some of my fellow beings whom I loved and trusted; but I have learned that, no matter what others may do, God is still in heaven, and my duty towards him is unchanged. I have learned to trust him when I could not understand all that came to me sometimes, and through that I have learned not to lose faith in my brother and sister, but to keep on trying to help them, even though they seem to have lost the way."

Blythe went away strengthened and somewhat comforted, but she arose next morning with some premonition of coming disaster upon her, and when a long-distance call came from Sardis that afternoon she waited in dread for the message. Then she heard her uncle's voice. "Can you come

home, Blythe? Aunt Lillian is badly hurt—lost control of the car on a down grade and it turned over with her.”

“I can come, Uncle John, but—does she want me?” Blythe closed her eyes to shut out the whirling room.

“I think so. She can’t talk, but she has been trying to tell me something, and when I asked if she wanted you a look of relief came into her eyes.”

“All right. I’ll be there on the first train. It leaves in thirty minutes.”

Roger was awaiting her at the depot in the roadster, and as they drove along the familiar road Blythe looked about with the strange feeling of a home-comer after years of absence, so crowded with events had been the months just past.

Hester opened the door as she came up the steps and greeted her affectionately. Blythe went at once to her aunt’s room, where Mrs. Blake lay helpless, her hand clasped in that of her husband, drawn closer to him in the shadow of death than she had ever been in the full flush of life. There was a look in her eyes as Blythe bent over her that made the girl stoop and kiss her tenderly.

Then she sat down and took the other hand in her own.

"She can't live but a few hours, the doctors say," Hester had told her. "Paralysis of the nerve centers as well as internal injuries."

It was not long, indeed, for as the day waned she seemed to sink lower, closing sometimes her wide, questioning eyes; but what lay behind them and her locked lips no one could know, for, though she rallied once as the day waned, it was to speak only one indistinct word, "Good-by." Then in the twilight she passed out with the dying day.

The next evening Blythe slipped out into the orchard, searching for the peace that used to come with the starlight. All day she had been busy with the hundred and one things which needed attending to, glad to be at work that she might forget, in some measure, the headache and that baffling sense of loss that comes when those with whom we have walked a little way have passed beyond our ken. Dropping down on the grass at the foot of an old, gnarled apple tree, she looked out across the peaceful meadow, strung with the tiny lanterns of dancing fireflies, to where the lights of the town pricked through the dusk.

Presently she was roused by the sound of approaching footsteps, and some one called her name softly. She hesitated a moment before she answered, for the voice was Neil's.

"Where are you, Blythe? Ah, I thought I might find you here." He held out his hands and drew her to her feet. "Heaven knows I don't want to intrude, little girl, but if there's anything I can do I want to do it. Somehow—you haven't seemed to care to have me around lately. What have I done, Blythe? Tell me."

Leaning against the bole of the big tree, her face white in the dusk, she told him.

"I'm sorry, Blythe," he said gravely. "I should have explained long ago if I had known. Fannie's family and ours were friends and neighbors for years. She comes from good stock—I don't know why she went to the bad. Margaret found her ill in one of the factory shanties—ill and penniless. She and mother did all they could for her and got her back on her feet again, and finally mother persuaded her to go home to her father and mother who live alone and wanted her. Margaret and I were taking her there that day—I suppose Margaret was in the car and you did not see her. If you don't believe me, she will tell you the same."

"I shall never ask her—I do believe you, Neil." And peace and healing came to her, even in the midst of heartache.

Loath to leave her uncle in his new loneliness, she lingered a few days; but at last she felt that she must go, and told him so.

"Why can't you stay, Blythe?" he asked. "I need you—we all need you."

And then, to her own surprise, she found herself thinking with regret of the office, the little white chapel, and the mission Sunday school. But she knew that, while others could do her work there, no one else could fill her niche in her uncle's heart and home, so she left with the promise to return as soon as Mr. Aldrich could find another assistant in the office.

"Hester and the youngsters will keep you from being lonely until I come back," she told him. For she had found in the home Hester's orphan niece and nephew who were finishing out the school year with their aunt, the one with whom they had been living having moved away.

One morning Margaret came into the office where she was at work.

"Blythe," she said, "I want you to go with me to the June meeting of the factory owners next week. I am to report on my work and I want

you there to verify some of the things I tell them and stand back of me when I ask for better dwellings and more sanitary conditions for the factory people. There is as much sickness in summer as in winter, but because there is less suffering among them as a whole they don't realize it. I have been trying to make them see that dirty dooryards and swarming flies are responsible in a great measure for the rows of little graves that grow longer every year; but they say, and with reason, too, 'What can we do? We must throw our refuse somewhere, and our houses are too poor to keep the flies out.' They must have help and encouragement or they won't try to clean up."

"I don't want to be a wet blanket," Blythe returned, "and I'll go with you gladly, but I don't believe the factory people will get any favors. The company wound is still raw over the loss of last winter, which the owners blame upon all impartially, and they will tell you calmly that they cannot afford any more improvements, with the extra building on hand this year."

"I'm going, at least," Margaret declared, "and do what I can. You are in a position to know all that I do and help me if you will."

"I'll do it gladly," was the reply. "My heart

A Vision Realized

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is with the factory people, but I can get the other fellow's viewpoint too, you see."

They went and presented the case as strongly as possible; but the company, divided against itself, could not agree on any decision, and all Margaret obtained was a half-hearted promise to look things over and see what could be done—which proved to be very little.

John Blake was waiting for Blythe when she reached home that evening. "I'm going to arrange for every child to spend a week at Pleasant Acres this summer," he said when she told of the meeting; "that is, if you and Hester can manage a dozen or so at a time. We can stretch two tents on the lawn for them to sleep in and turn them loose through the day. We'll make them think they've had a peep into paradise." All of which happened in due time. His next remark, however, filled Blythe with dismay.

"Hester thinks she must leave this fall," he said. "This aunt the children have been living with has moved on to a western ranch where there is not much chance for an education, so Hester thinks she must look after them."

"Why, Uncle John, we can't get along without Hester! It is an absolute impossibility! Why can't the children stay with us and go to school?"

Which was exactly what he wished her to propose, but he only said, "I am perfectly willing myself, but I wanted to consult you first. You are my junior partner, you know."

One summer morning a few weeks later Neil walked into his office in such exuberant spirits that his stenographer looked at him in some surprise.

"Lovely morning, Miss Steele," he assured her.

"Why, yes—rather cloudy, though."

"So it is—I hadn't noticed. It is clearing away, however."

Then he went to work at his desk and became so absorbed that when she inquired about the location of a farm which was listed for sale he answered, "Pleasant Acres, a mile east of town."

"I was referring to Riverview Farm," she corrected him, rather coldly.

"Oh, yes, excuse me!" he apologized hastily. "I was thinking of another place."

The day, usually so full, dragged abominably, and he was glad when an errand called him out of town in the afternoon, for it relieved his spirits somewhat to get out in the country and drive the runabout at the top of its speed. When he came back Miss Steele was gone, much to his relief,

and he turned his attention immediately to the telephone.

"Hello, Is this 417? Is this Blythe?"

"Yes, this is Blythe," she assured him.

"I saw you come this morning—or rather I saw you go out of town."

"Did you? You are a long time making yourself known."

"Oh, well, business, you know. I'm coming out this evening if you don't mind," he added.

"All right; do. If we had anything prepared for company," she continued, "I'd ask you out for supper, but Uncle John was called away this afternoon, so we're just having old maid's tea."

"What is that?" he inquired. "I've never sampled one, I guess."

"Oh, anything that is convenient," she returned. "This time it is milk just off the ice and chicken sandwiches and fresh-baked rolls and honey and strawberry shortcake with whipped cream, and——"

"An oasis in the desert, Blythe! I've been eating restaurant fare for two solid weeks."

"Oh, yes, and Hester baked molasses cookies to-day—fat ones with raisins sticking out every now and then."

"Oh, have a heart!" he implored. "I shall

come without an invitation if you continue to tempt me."

"Well, come on," she said, demurely. "I'm not sure what Hester will say, but perhaps she won't mind. Shall we look for you right away?"

But her question fell on a dead receiver, for Neil was on his way to the runabout. He knew Hester too well to be at all alarmed at Blythe's suggestion of an inhospitable reception, and headed the car in the direction of Pleasant Acres at once.

When supper was over he donned a pair of Mr. Blake's overalls and helped the hired man with the evening work, then romped with the children on the lawn and so won their hearts that there was a howl of protest when Hester carried them off to bed. Then he went in search of Blythe, who had disappeared, and found her with Mr. Blake, sampling the pink-cheeked harvest apples in the orchard.

"Have one," she invited. "When Uncle came home he told me the apples were ripe so we ran away and came to see."

Presently John Blake left them and went towards the house, and Neil turned to her and asked reminiscently, "Have we ever watched the

moon come up over the hill from the edge of the orchard?"

"I don't remember any such occasion," she replied.

"Then let's establish a precedent," he proposed, and they strolled down through the apple trees and into the clover-scented meadow beyond. They talked of—what does it matter? Everything except the one thing beating uppermost in their young hearts. Halting at last, they stood leaning on the gate which led into a wide wheat field where the shocks of grain stood in long rows like silent sentinels of the night. Before them lay spread the great checkerboard of field and meadow, bathed in the soft afterglow of the sunset and the light of a round, yellow moon, just peering over the edge of the horizon.

For a time they stood in silence; then Neil repeated reverently, "Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord." How much nearer heaven would we wish to be than this, if only there were no sin and sorrow anywhere in the peace of the night?" Then he turned to her and said softly, "It would be almost heaven to me if I knew—Sweetheart, if we love each other, why wait longer to say it?"

Pray do not listen longer. This is their hour,

and no unbidden ear should hear. You, young man, if you wish light on the subject, may consult an encyclopedia of etiquette or a treatise on mathematics with equal benefit, for no matter how carefully you plan your speech you will find it gone from your mind and only the words of the heart remaining when the decisive moment comes; and you, dear girl, will think them the sweetest words ever spoken and read the meaning clear, even though the tongue that gives them utterance be halting and uncertain. As for the rest of us, we have our memories, sweeter by far in that they are shared by only one other.

So, though moonlit eves have been made for lovers since the world began, this one smiled only for these two. For them, the grave, golden moon lighted the way home across the dewy meadows while the clover blossoms kissed their feet as they passed; and for them rose dreams and hopes for the future, fused and blended together by the pure, white fire of love. And a gray-haired man, watching them come home, felt a mist before his eyes which was not the mist of the night, and a strange pain at his heart at the stir of an old memory.

At the edge of the orchard they paused to look out again across the moonlit fields. "Dear," he

asked, "would you be content to be the wife of a common, everyday farmer?"

"I can imagine a great deal worse condition in life," she replied, smiling. "Tell me about it."

"I have always wanted to dig in soil I could call my own and breathe the free air and do all the experimenting I wished, for myself. I have a little ahead—enough to give us a start towards a home of our own. I have received the intimation, from those in a position to know, that my previous training and experience would be of use in the work which has grown dear to my soul—the building up of Zion. So, with your consent, I have decided where to buy. Would a little cottage, set in a tangle of green trees and the view of a river with brown and emerald shores, be any inducement?"

"Oh, Neil," she breathed softly, "you meant an uncommon, everyday farmer, didn't you? Yes, I'm sure I shall be happy as a queen!"

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"Is everything ready, Hester?" Blythe came in through the kitchen door one bright October morning, fresh as the new day itself, with a glow on her face and a light in her blue eyes that Hester did not fail to note.

"Everything is ready," she replied. "Just a few finishing touches. The children will help me with those, so run along and do whatever you please. They must do something to make up for missing school to-day."

"Sure we will," cried David, and Madge added an eager assent; so Blythe slipped away to the veranda for a long look at the view she loved so well and to dream for a moment of a future close at hand. Already the month had been marked by two events which gave her reason to remember it; one the baptisms of John Blake, Roger, Marian, and Hester in the chapel font at Sardis; and the other, the ordination of Neil Cameron to the lesser priesthood at the fall conference, held at the little white chapel where the angel message had first come to her. She had listened with heart overflowing with emotion, to the words, so nearly identical with those spoken to her, though given through a different officiating minister: "Thou shalt be an instrument in the hands of God in the work of the redemption of Zion and the building up of the New Jerusalem."

She was thinking of this now, as she stood looking out over the sun-filled valley—thinking, too, of the dear home she was leaving and the man she respected and loved as a father, and of

her future with Neil, whom she respected no less and, after the way of the world, loved a little more. She was waiting for him now, wondering why her heart could find room at the same moment for such a measure of pain and rapture. She searched the road for the familiar brewster-green runabout, but there was only a dark blue "chummy" roadster, shining and new, in sight, which received but a passing glance until she saw it stop at the gate. Then she gave a start of surprise, for Neil himself stepped out, took off his hat, and waved it invitingly.

"Come down from your tower, princess," he called. "I have something to show you. You are a vision of the morning!" he continued, on closer inspection of her glowing face. "A vision to bring mere man to his knees in the dust! It makes my heart turn over to reflect that in less than two hours I shall have the undisputed right to kiss you any time, any place——"

"What extravagant language you do use, Neil! And don't get down on your knees—grass stains are very hard to remove. Whose car is this, and what were you going to show me?"

"My dear, this is our car! Don't you know the runabout was only loaned to me while acting as county agent? This is the coach of state in which

we shall depart on our wedding journey a few hours hence. If you will take the trouble to observe closely, you will find the space between the front and back seats packed with necessary articles for camping out in case we would desire to do so and the weather permits. I tried to leave room for a suit case or two," he added, poking about among the contents of the machine.

"Oh, how lovely!" she cried. "And to think we can go in our very own car! I have been dreading a railway journey!"

"Good morning, Neil." John Blake had sauntered down to the gate as they talked and stood looking the new possession over appraisingly. "When you two children have finished admiring the car and one another, come on into the house. I want to talk to you."

He was seated before his desk when they came in, a pile of papers before him which had been recently collected from an open drawer. From them he selected a bank book and held it out to Blythe.

"When your father and mother died," he said, "I took what they left and deposited it in your name. This shows what you have, with the addition of the interest and a little I have added now and then."

Blythe took it wonderingly and looked at the total. Even a rapid computation, after a glance at the original amount, told her that Mr. Blake's addition had not been so small as he would have it seem.

"I wanted to be sure you would have something for yourself," he went on, "but so long as you had no need of it I said nothing about it to you, though my lawyer was fully advised of the matter."

"You are far too good to me, uncle," Blythe said unsteadily, her arms around his neck. "You have always been a father to me."

With a quick gesture of tenderness he drew her down to his knee. "You will notice this total is several years old," he went on. "I withdrew it then and invested it in Government bonds, so there is a little more plus the interest. It is ready for you whenever you want it."

"That is for Blythe to decide," Neil replied quietly, in answer to the glance Mr. Blake gave him. "The money is safely invested now, and it seems as well to me to leave it in bonds."

"Just as well for the present, perhaps," Blythe said, "but I happen to know where it can be used to advantage." Then she went on with firmness as Neil raised a dissenting voice, "This is going

to be a partnership business as well as a stewardship, or none at all. You see, uncle, we are going on that basis, so it is best to tell you before you turn it over to us."

"My dear child, it is yours without any turning over. As for the stewardship part of it, I filed an inventory when I visited the bishop two weeks ago and expect to go on that basis myself. And though I expect to remain here a while, I shall sell when I can do so to advantage and do my share towards helping to buy up the land there, as we have been commanded to do. I am trying, just now, to get my tithing paid up, and it is taking most of my loose change, he went on whimsically, "but the Lord has blessed me so abundantly all my life that it seems to me to be about time to begin paying the back rent. So go ahead, my children; do the best you can with the light and intelligence God gives you and may his blessing be ever with you."

There was no time for more, for the guests were arriving. There were only a few, in accordance with Blythe's wishes—Marian and Roger; and Ralph, Jean, Mrs. Cameron, Margaret, and Betty from the city. And since all weddings are more or less alike, we shall only say that after the brief but impressive ceremony

was over, with Elder Howe, the minister who had led Blythe into the waters of baptism, officiating, and Hester's bountiful dinner disposed of, the farewells were said and the blue roadster went spinning down the road, while John Blake waved bravely from the veranda as long as a certain blue-clad, girlish figure with a fluttering handkerchief was visible.

So they began their life journey together. Perhaps the thought of the bigness of it sealed their lips, for they sat silent while the brown road rolled up to meet them and disappeared beneath the flying wheels. At length Blythe, looking up at Neil's strong, browned profile, felt the pain of the sundering of old ties melt into a warm wave of joy, and murmured, softly and experimentally, the unaccustomed words, "My husband."

Softly spoken though they were, he heard them and turned to her with his grave eyes suddenly alight. "My wife!" he said. "It sobers one, doesn't it, sweetheart—that marriage covenant that says so little and means so much. I hope it may always mean as much to us as it does at this instant."

"It will mean more and more as the years go by," she replied. "It must. I am not afraid—with you."

"Your husband has many faults, I fear," said Neil, slowly, "but I have come to you clean and straight, unashamed to look the world in the face, conscious I have never knowingly wronged man, woman, or little child."

"Do you remember another ride we took on just such a day as this?" she inquired after another silence. "The very first one we took together and alone if I remember rightly?"

"Do I remember? Shall I ever forget? Only you had too much to say about Bob Weston to make it an unmixed pleasure to me. I felt aggrieved because he had ever spoken of that road on top of the world. I wanted to discover it to you solely by myself. I used to fear he was something of a rival. Was I right?"

"We were always friends," she replied. Never had she spoken, even to Neil, of Bob's farewell visit that winter night. "He is in South America now, with a party of mining engineers. That was the one thing he always wished to do. He even took a course in it at one time, but his mother did not approve—no gentleman's job, she said—and his father was determined he should be a lawyer. Between them and a doting grandfather he came very near to being nothing, but some

stronger strain of ancestry saved him from the wreck."

"Was that the reason you didn't marry him instead of me?" Neil persisted, searching the grave eyes lifted to his.

"No—you are the reason," she answered with a reassuring smile. But she did not tell him of the one letter she had received from Bob after he left, in which he said, "Have you married Neil Cameron yet, Blythe? I know he is ten times more worthy of you than I—but don't blame me too much when I tell you that even yet, lying by the campfire at night, I have my dreams." Nor did she tell him of her reply—a letter full of hope and encouragement and news of home and friends, but one which brought Bob's dreams to a speedy and merciful end.

One golden afternoon, when they had tired of loitering through the dreamy, enchanted days and star-strewn, mysterious nights of Indian summer, they stood on the Temple Lot and looked out across the City of Hope. Peace was over all like a mantle, enshrouding the old Stone Church, the quiet streets, the distant squares of the city whose clustering roofs were half hidden among the trees. Only the passing of an occasional automobile and the far-away whine of a

city-bound electric car broke the stillness of the sunlit air, softened by the warm, autumn haze.

"I don't know why I have such a feeling of perfect peace and contentment," Blythe said, unless the blessing of God rests in fuller measure on this land that he has set apart as his own. It is a beautiful city and a beautiful land—perfect, it seems to me."

"Perfect in beauty and location, certainly," Neil responded, "because the place was chosen by the Master Builder; and we earnestly hope and fervently pray and ardently work for its perfection in all things when it shall be a glorious similitude of the pattern given by its great Designer."

For a time they lingered, but as the hour grew late they left the sacred spot and, winding through the streets, came out upon a rock road with a panorama of country on either side so fair to the eye that Blythe caught her breath in delight.

"I don't wonder that you wanted to come back," she said. "It is a vision of loveliness. Are we near home yet?"

"A few miles farther on," was the answer, and she sat in silence, watching the changing landscape. As it began to darken they turned into a

wide valley and Neil pointed out to her the outline of a small bungalow nestling among overhanging trees a little way ahead.

"There is our home," he told her, "and there, not far beyond, the town and church. Here, please God, we shall live and labor until he orders otherwise."

They drove in under the bending trees and climbed the steps to the door; but when Neil had opened it Blythe gave an exclamation of surprise.

"Why, it is all furnished!" she cried. "No wonder you wouldn't stop and go furniture hunting in the city! When did you do it, Neil?"

"That uncle of yours insisted on doing it," he replied. "That was one of his reasons for coming down last month. I know we had planned on doing it ourselves, but he was quite unmanageable about it. He did it better than we could have afforded to, no doubt, for you know there are decided limitations to your husband's pocket-book. At his request I told him what you wanted, so I don't believe you will be disappointed."

"Dear Uncle John! What have I done to deserve all this happiness?"

"Once before you reproached yourself for such a state of affairs," he reminded her, "and then

you found your pathway full of lions. So don't think the difficulties are all over now. We shall have our trials that will try us to the very core, perhaps, for in this way are we to be made polished and tested stones for the building of Zion; but if we keep right with each other and with God we have nothing to fear."

"I know," she answered softly, "and I know, too, that no matter how much we care for each other there will come times to both of us when we shall have to fight our own personal battles alone, with no one but God to help us."

Then, womanlike, she explored the house and lingered over its contents until Neil, coming in from one of his trips to the car, inquired, "Are we going to have anything to eat, Blythe? I've made a fire and put the tea kettle on and brought the stuff in from the car."

"Oh, of course," she replied. "I had forgotten there was any such thing as eating."

When the meal was ready, however, she missed him and went in search, calling his name. He answered from the porch and, as she came to his side, slipped his arm around her and drew her close.

"I have been seeing visions—night visions, I suppose," he said. "Did you ever look upon a

scene of such surpassing beauty as this moonlit valley? I have been looking into the future and I can see it as I see it to-night, but in it dwells a busy, happy people, filled with the love of God and their fellow men. I see mills and factories at work—I see farmers and miners and mechanics—men in every vocation of life, working together in peace and harmony and understanding. And when I look ahead a little farther to the time when our Lord shall come suddenly to his temple, my soul is filled with such boundless exaltation and joy that I can find no words to express it.”

From somewhere in the night came the distant rattle of a wagon, as a load of happy young people passed along the road and their voices floated back, mellow and sweet:

“Israel, Israel, God is speaking;
Hear your great Deliv’rer’s voice!
Now a glorious morn is breaking
For the people of his choice.
Come to Zion, come to Zion,
And within her walls rejoice.”

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